CU

AMIGA

Q&A
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THE MAGAZINE FOR A500, A600, A1200 & CD32 OWNERS

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FULL PROGRAM!

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SCALA
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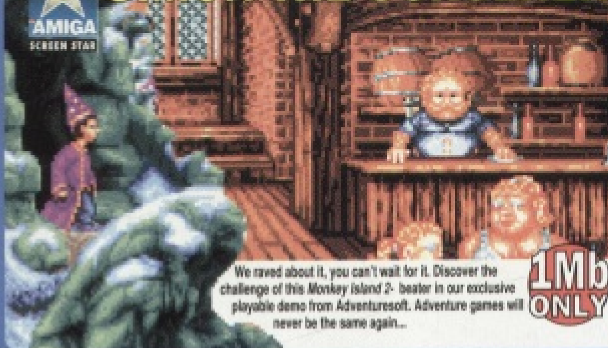
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SIMON THE SORCERER



We raved about it, you can't wait for it. Discover the challenge of this *Monkey Island 2-* beater in our exclusive playable demo from Adventuresoft. Adventure games will never be the same again...

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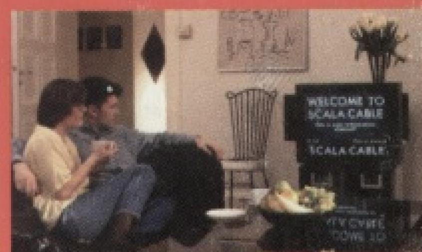
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SCALA GOES GLOBAL!

THE MULTIMEDIA REVOLUTION TAKES OFF!

FIND OUT WHY THE AMIGA IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE MULTIMEDIA BOOM



FULL STORY ON PAGE 30!

PLUS!

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PETER LEE'S DPAINT AGA MASTERCLASS



CLASH OF THE CONSOLES

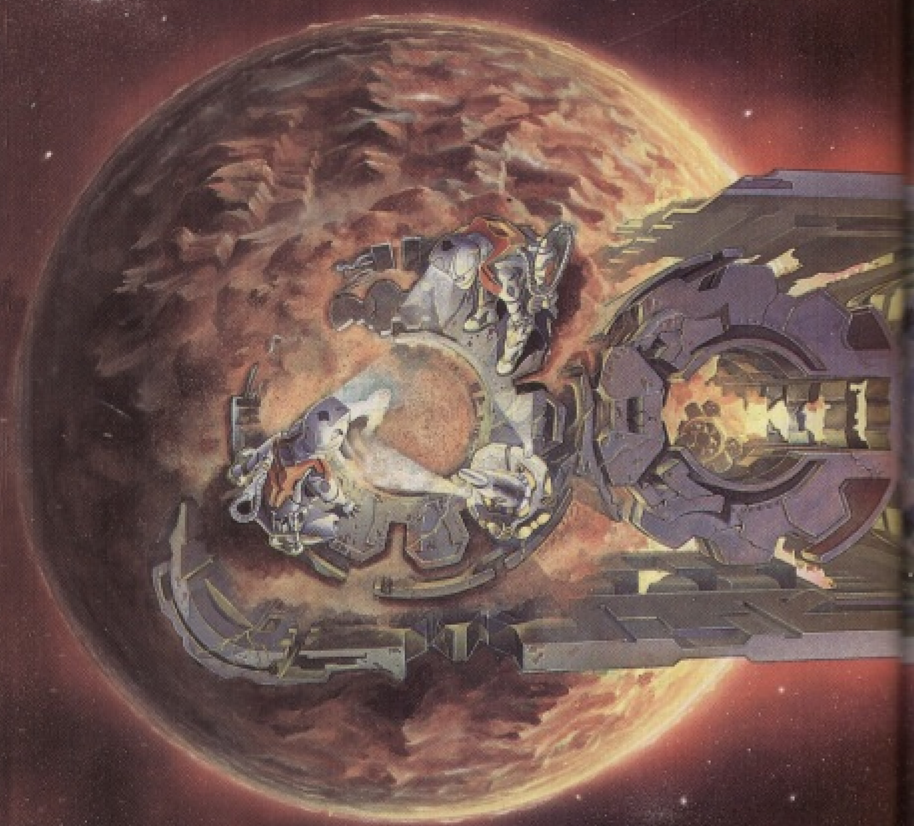
CD32 vs 3DO!

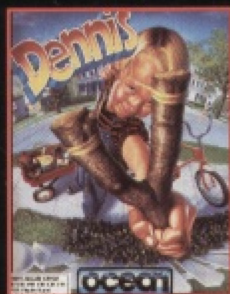


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Discover a wh





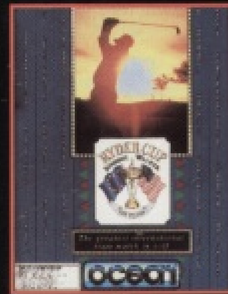


Now you can play the sling-shot hero and join in on all his side splitting pranks.



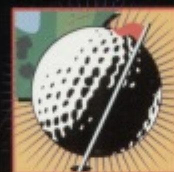
Dennis is his name and mischief is his game as he drives Mr. Wilson out of his mind! Wreak havoc, double the trouble or just mess things up a little, whichever... it's fun all the way!

AMIGA 1200 . AMIGA CD32 . AMIGA 500/600





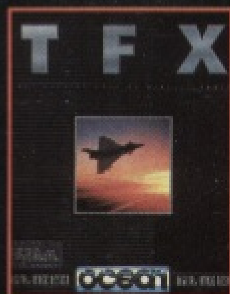
Now you can compete in the Ryder Cup - one of sport,s greatest events. Every detail of the game has been intricatetly simulated to put you right there on the course. You must get every detail spot-on if you want to keep up with your high calibre opponents.



IBM PC & COMPATIBLES . AMIGA 1200 . AMIGA CD32 . AMIGA 500/600

ple NEW world











TFX... the only choice worth making where the leading edge of aerial combat is concerned.



"The graphic detail is quite superb... TFX is quite often like watching a movie..." PC REVIEW

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IBM PC & COMPATIBLES . AMIGA 1200 . AMIGA CD32 . CD ROM

GRAB YOUR NUTZ!

This well bad rodent has got things to prove... like:

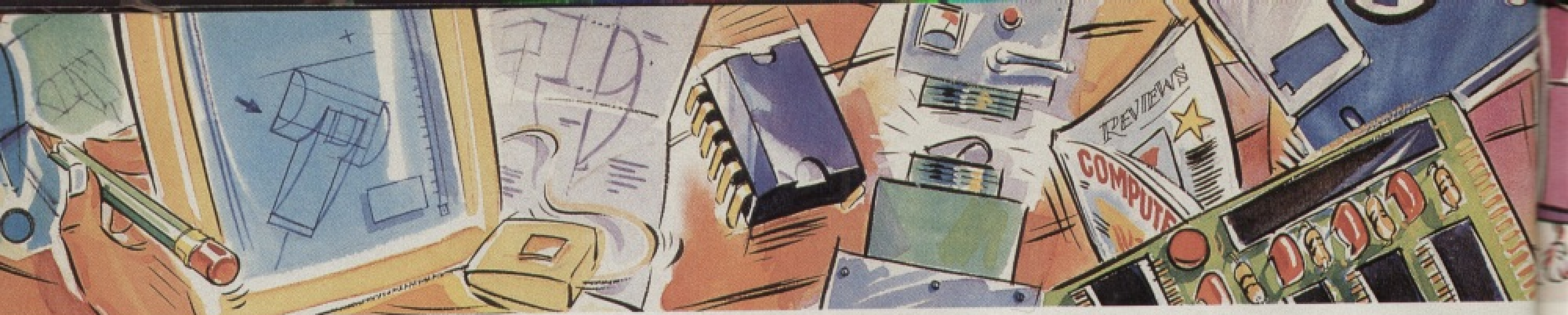


"I can flatten a hedgehog with just a swish of the tail"... or "Just throw me a nut and I'll make Billy the Kid look like a low rent circus side-show!"

He's a cracker, so don't you miss Mr. NUTZ!

AMIGA 500 . AMIGA 600

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128MB Optical Internal £779
128MB Optical External £879
128MB Optical Disk £39.95
SCSI Controller A2000 ....£129

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The Floptical stores 20MB of data on a 3.5" disk (a SCSI interface is required).

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Floptical A500 External £389

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3.5" Removable HD from Syquest. Each cartridge stores 105MB. Syquest speed is 17ms.

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We can supply SCSI or IDE 3.5" drives in many sizes.

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2.5" Miniature internal HD for the A600/A1200, (these drives come complete with a cable and installation software)

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icd*products*

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Trifecta 2000 LX 80MB HD £239
Trifecta 2000 LX 160MB HD £329
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Trifecta 500 LX Bare £195
Trifecta 500 LX 80MB HD £295
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a600*memory*

1MB RAM with battery backed clock.

A600 Memory £39.95

1.5MB*memory*

Fully supports 1MB of chip RAM and compatible with Fatter Agnus. (Requires Kickstart 1.3 and above, not compatible with A500+. Your Amiga needs to be opened , this may effect your warranty)

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1MB*thru'port*

Fully supports 1MB of chip RAM and fully compatible with Fatter Agnus. (Requires Kickstart 1.3 and above, not compatible with A500+. Your Amiga needs to be opened, this may effect your warranty)

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PC501+*card*





High quality memory card comes with 1MB of RAM on-board to expand your Amiga A500+ to 2MB of Chip RAM. (Fits in the trap-door, does not affect your warranty)

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a500*memory*

4 Chip 512K RAM expansion with or without battery backed clock. Free software included. (A500+ compatible)

A500 Card with clock £29
A500 Card without clock....£24

a500*8mb board*

Expand your Amiga from 2MB to 8MB of RAM. Plugs into side slot, full auto config. and full through port.

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A500 4MB Board £219
A500 8MB Board £299

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2MB to 8MB expansion for the A2000. Full auto config., IDE interface and 12 months warranty

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A2000 4MB Board £199
A2000 8MB Board £289

new*2MB chip ram*



Increase your Amiga's memory to 2MB of chip RAM, including 2MB 8375 Agnus, easy to fit (internal fitting), unlike every other 2MB chip RAM board currently available you A500 trap memory still works! fully compatible.

£159

special*offer*



PC1208 68882-20MHz OMB RAM board.

PC1208 68882 20MHz £109.95

power*drives*



All Power Computing's disk drives come with a 12 month guarantee. The PC880B is available with Blitz Amiga, Blitz and X-Copy or Cyclone compatible (this drive is only available to registered owners of X-Copy Professional). The drive comes in a choice of two colours, black and cream.

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PC880B with black case (CDTV) £60
PC880E Economy Cyclone Comp.. ..£49.95
PC881 Amiga 500 internal drive....£40
PC882 Amiga 2000 internal drive....£40
PC883 Dual disk drive....£125

PC880B*drive*



The award winning external disk drive which includes Anti-click (cures that annoying click), Virus blocker (prevents viruses) and built-in backup hardware. Now available with Cyclone compatible chip.

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Extremely powerful disk back-up utility, uses the latest custom chip design. Hardware designed by Power Computing.

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(techincal is available from 2-5.30pm)

power *computing ltd*

epson *GT-6500*



A high resolution 24-bit colour flatbed scanner from Epson. Scan up to A4 in size on this 600DPI scanner. Comes with PowerScan or ASDG (ASDG is an extra £99). GT-8000 scans up to 800DPI.



Epson GT6500 PowerScan	**£699**
Epson GT6500 ASDG	**£798**
Epson GT8000 PowerScan	**£1199**
Epson GT8000 ASDG	**£1298**
Document Feeder	**£399**

power *scan 4*



Completely re-designed powerful user interface, produce 256 greyscale images (on a AGA machine), scan in 64 greyscales (non AGA Amiga can only display 16), add colour to greyscale images, special effects, new support for 18-bit scanner, add text to scans, available with mono or colour scanner.

£119

power *scanners*



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PowerScanner 4 (colour)	**£239**
PowerScanner 4 inc. OCR	**£159**
PowerScanner 3	**£99**
Scanner 4 Upgrade inc. interface	**£50**
Scanner 4 Upgrade software	**£20**
OCR Junior Software	**£49**
OCR Full Version Upgrade	**£49**

(OCR full version is only available to registered users of OCR Junior)

auto *rom sharer*

ROM Share	**£19.95**
ROM Share inc. v2.04	**£50**
ROM Share inc. v1.3	**£39**
ROM Share A600	**£29**
ROM Share A600 v1.3	**£55**

supra *modems*



Comes complete with English phone cable, RS 232 serial cable, PSU & comms software.

Supra Fax Modem+	**£119**
Supra Fax Modem 32BIS	**£229**

pc *1208*

Power Computings latest 32-bit memory expansion for the Amiga 1200 is now available. The PC1208 uses the latest industry standard 32-bit Simm technology which allows you to use 1MB, 2MB, 4MB and 8MB modules. Simply adding either a PC1208 to your Amiga 1200 will increase its processing speed by 219%, comes with real-time battery backed clock and optional FPU available.

Bare

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PC1208 + 68882 20MHz	**£109.95**
PC1208 + 68882 33MHz	**£119.95**
PC1208 + 68882 40MHz	**£139.95**
PC1208 + 68882 50MHz	**£179.95**

With 2MB

PC1208 + 68881 20MHz	**£139.95**
PC1208 + 68882 20MHz	**£159.95**
PC1208 + 68882 33MHz	**£199.95**
PC1208 + 68882 40MHz	**£225.95**
PC1208 + 68882 50MHz	**£265.95**

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PC1208 + 68882 20MHz	**£269.95**
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pc *1204*



The original PC1204 4MB 32-bit memory expansion is still available, and is exceptional value.

PC1204 with 4MB RAM

PC1204 with 4MB only	**£185.95**
PC1204 + 68881 20MHz	**£219.95**
PC1204 + 68882 20MHz	**£235.95**
PC1204 + 68882 33MHz	**£259.95**
PC1204 + 68882 40MHz	**£279.95**
PC1204 + 68882 50MHz	**£319.95**

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miscellanous *products*

PowerMouse	**£15**
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Python 1 Joystick	**£9.99**
Apache 1 Joystick	**£7.99**

xl *drive*



The 1.76MB Disk Drive* can be used with any Amiga. With the 'XL Drive' you can fit a massive 1.76MB on a high density floppy disk, the drive can also act as a standard 880K drive and can also read & write disks written on an Amiga 4000 internal HD drive.

External XL Drive	**£85**
Internal XL Drive	**£75**
A4000 Internal XL Drive	**£75**

*Requires KickStart 2 or above.

exclusive *products*

pc880 *upgrade*

Power Computing can now upgrade your PC880 drive from a 880K to a 1.76MB high density drive, all you need to do is check that you have the serial number 'Sony MFD17W-22' on your disk drive casing. (You'll need to unscrew the casing. This does not affect the warranty)

PC880 Interface upgrade **£49.95**

new

disk *expander*

This Easy to use and install expander can add 60% to your Hard Drive capacity. It quickly compresses and decompresses data and is very reliable ensuring no data corruption. It works with all drives, SCSI , IDE, floppies, even RAM disk and is expandable as new compression libraries are developed.

Disk Expander **£29.95**

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CU AMIGA

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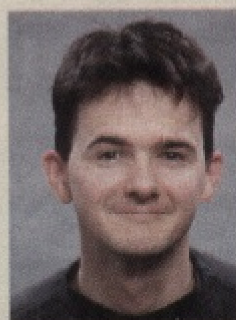


30 SCALA

Scala - It's Norwegian for ladder! It's also one of the largest Amiga packages there are. *Scala* is capable of a lot more than just titling your home videos, you know. From controlling TV sets in hotels to telling you what sort of car to buy, *Scala* is revolutionising the world. Join Mat Broomfield on a voyage around the *Scala* globe, and stop off with Jason Holborn as he takes a look at *Scala MM300*. If you've viewed the coverdisk, and want to really get connected to the world of Amiga Multimedia, then read on..

OFF THE CUFF

EDITORIAL



Dan Slingsby – Editor

With the new year already upon us, the Amiga world is looking healthier than ever. Sales of the A1200 and CD32 have really taken off. Software sales, too, were buoyant with CD32 titles topping the all-formats CD games chart. Mindscape's *Liberation* leapt straight into the number one spot, trouncing LucasArts' *Rebel Assault* in the process! With a new generation of high-end Amigas due for release at the end of the year, a high-density disk drive about to be bundled with the A1200 and some exciting changes planned for the CD32, Commodore are firing on all cylinders as the new year begins. 1994 should be very interesting indeed and, as always, CU AMIGA will be there to cover it!

For this month's issue we've lined up a Scala triple whammy! We're giving away *Scala's Home Video Titler* and we're also taking a look at how *Scala* has become established as the world's premier multimedia presentation system. If you thought multimedia was boring you'll get a pleasant surprise. Turn to page 30 for the full story.

On a more personal note, this is my final issue of CU AMIGA. After four years with the magazine, during which time I've witnessed the Amiga stake its claim to be the ultimate home computer, I'm off to greener pastures, but the rest of the CU AMIGA team will be back next month, bringing you that evocative mix of news and reviews that you've come to know and love. We've also got a truly gigantic graphics and animation feature and an exclusive interview with Jim Sachs, the premier Amiga artist. Lastly, I'd just like to say a big thank you to all our loyal readers who have supported us throughout 1993. Circulation has rocketed, and it's very encouraging to get your letters of support. So, I'd just like to say a big thanks, and wish you a happy new year.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 19 FEBRUARY

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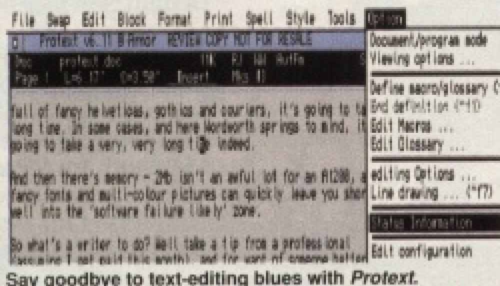
ABC 111, 408 Jan-June 1993

AD INDEX...........

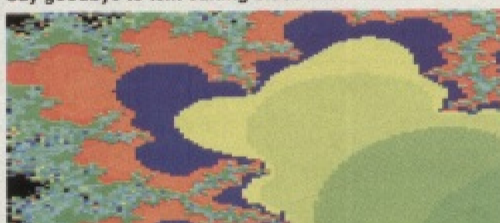
GET SERIOUS

PRODUCTIVITY REVIEWS PRODUCTIVITY REVIEW

GVP have worked their usual magic and released the A1200 expansion to beat them all, we take a close look. You can double the size of your hard drive with a £30 program from Power Computing, we also take the world's first close look at the CD32 FMV unit.



Say goodbye to text-editing blues with *Protext*.


The wacky world of fractal animation with *FractalPro*.

SCREEN SCENE

GAME REVIEWS GAME REVIEWS GAME REVIEWS

"Ooh, isn't it cold?" as pensioners are prone to say. It doesn't really matter, though, as we've got some of the hottest games you are likely to see this month. From big licenses like *Jurassic Park* and *Batman Returns* to some top notch original stormers, like the fabulous *Skidmarks* and Core's *Bubba 'N' Stix*. What are you waiting for?


It's on with the shades and the triple strength seat belts, as Acid's *Skidmarks* hits the Amiga.


Strategy ahoy! Guns, death and plenty of sand in Empire's *Campaign 2*.

REGULARS

COVERDISKS

Now you can create your own professional video titles and presentations with *Scala Home Titler 100*. You can also explore the fascinating world of science in the first of a twelve part program give away.

DISK 74 PAGE 30

If you own a video recorder or camcorder, you'll doubtless be aware how much professional titles improve a home movie. The trouble is most titling packages produce blocky-looking text that looks like it was generated on a toy computer rather than a state-of-the-art Amiga. *Scala's Home Titler 100* is the premium Amiga titling package designed to generate super-smooth broadcast quality titles. It's supplied with a selection of different typefaces and can use scalable fonts to ensure that they always look professional.

If the fascinating world of science interests you, then you're bound to love *Circular Motion*, the first program in our *Weird Science* series; a 12 program set designed specially so that CU AMIGA readers can explore the mysteries of physics.



DISK 75 PAGE 68

As everyone sits around waiting for the next step in graphic adventures, we at CU AMIGA can sit back and smile knowingly. We've already seen Adventuresoft's brilliant *Simon The Sorcerer*, so we know just how great it is. A massive game, it's being hailed as one of the greatest PC adventures ever, and the Amiga version is every bit as good. You too can lounge about with a knowledgable smile and an air of wisdom that belies your years, once you've loaded our exclusive playable demo. Don't worry, this isn't like other adventure demos where you only get to look at a couple of screens, or where you only get one puzzle, or two at the most. This is a massive demo, and at the end of it, if you don't agree that this is one of the best adventures available out there, we'll get Mitch to eat his hat. Can you work through it as fast as we did?



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Epson GT 6500 Colour Scanner £759.00
A high quality, A4 flatbed colour scanner. Includes ASDG scanner software

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Backs up your floppies and hard drives onto VHS video tapes.

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Rendale 8802 FMC Genlock £159.95
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Vidi Amiga 12 .... £74.95
Grabs full colour images from a video source in under one second.

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Scenery Animator v4 .... £49.95
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Vista Pro upgrade v2 - 3.0 .... £30.00
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Animate a path through your Vista Pro 3D landscape

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Final Copy II UK £64.00
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TruePrint 24 .... £45.99
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Wimbledon, London
SW19 1DW

Credit Card to the above address, or fax Emerald Sales direct on :

FAX: 081 715 8877

Or telephone the Emerald Sales lines on:

TELEPHONE: 081 715 8866

and have all of the information ready.

IMPORTANT: We will authorize and bill your credit card when we are able to ship your product from stock and process your order, not before.

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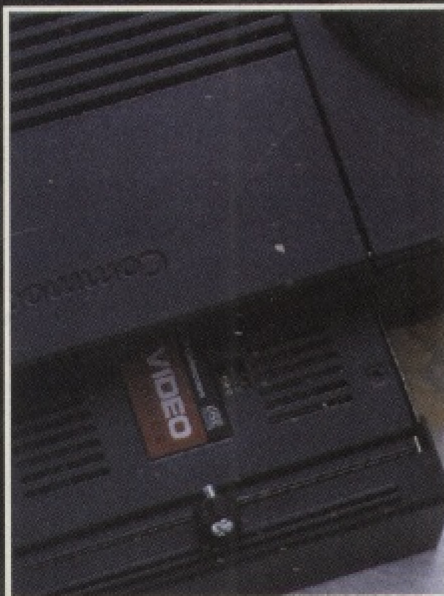
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CU NEWS

COMMODORE RELEASES FMV CARD

After all the hype surrounding the CD32's abilities as movie player, CU AMIGA were proud to take delivery this week of one of the very first Full Motion Video (FMV) units in Europe.

If you've been following Commodore's exploits over the last year, you can hardly have failed to realise that the FMV is the special CD32 attachment that transforms CD32 from an exceptionally powerful games console into an even more impressive laser disk player capable of replaying any movies store on CD using the MPEG1 standard.



The unit is about five inches wide by six and a quarter long and half an inch thick. It consists of a fairly substantial circuit board encased in a very robust metal box. At the back of the CD32 there's a plastic blanking plate which can be removed in order to get at the guts of the machine. With the plate out of the way, the FMV card slides into the CD32's case, with a five inch slot plugging into the connector in the console. Because of the metal shielding inside the CD32, a little extra care is needed to ensure that the two fit together properly, but that's all that is involved in fitting the unit. Simply replace the screw that formerly held the blanking plate in place and you're ready to go.

When you turn the CD32 back on, it seems to take a bit longer than usual to display the spinning CD title screen, but apart from that, the CD32 is completely transparent in operation, only revealing its presence by the type of CDs you can now play.

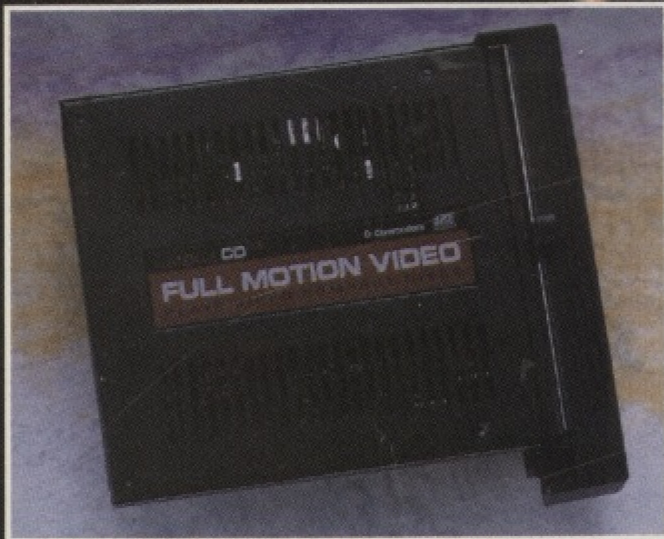
What type of CDs? Well, motion pictures for a start! To say nothing of music videos, FMV games and anything else that uses the white book standard for MPEG compression.

Okay, so it's only fair to point out that there aren't actually many, if any commercially available white book products yet, but the will come, and you'd better believe it! Why? Well for lots of reasons, but first and foremost for sheer convenience. It's simply easier to store feature films or pop videos on CD. They're cheaper to reproduce, smaller to store, have a higher markup price, and are virtually indestructible. More importantly perhaps, they already have the backing of the industry, with giants like Philips, Warner and many other film studios completely committed to the technology.

With our FMV card, we received a demo disk containing Seal's 'Killer' music video, the CDXL version of Commodore's Christmas CD32 ad (the one starring the mad scientist and the exploding robot) and the MPEG1 version of the same advert.

We started by watching the CDXL advert. CDXL is a simulated form of MPEG1 that doesn't require an FMV card. The sound on the ad seemed near perfect and although the graphics were obviously not 24–bit, they were very good, if a tad jerky. Next came the MPEG version of the same ad. Where the CDXL version had been only partial screen, this one occupied every millimetre of the screen, but what I found startling was the sheer quality of the image.Although it wasn't 24–bit either, you'd never be able to tell by looking. The resolution was too high to see, and the animation was silky smooth with no visible jerkiness at all.

After that, we eagerly selected the Seal video expecting great things, but we were to be sorely disappointed. The video was actually the first thing that Commodore commissioned to demonstrate the unit at shows, and it had been hurriedly put together using relatively poor encoding. This meant that the picture and sound noticeably jumped from time to time, just like a record skipping, only far, far briefer. For the connoisseurs in the audience it was very intrusive, although it didn't really detract from my enjoyment.



Anyway, Commodore have yet to announce what they'll be bundling with the unit in terms of CDs, but MPEG games are definitely not on the cards, whilst a music video or compilation, perhaps by Take That, Queen or Eurythmics looks increasingly likely. By the time you read this, the unit will be in the shops. Retail price £199.

IT'S ALL ABOUT ENCODING

The only problem with recording video footage in the MPEG1 standard is that it's both costly and time consuming to do a good job. The more time you spend, the better the results, and this inevitably will mean that companies on a budget are going to be getting away with the minimum possible effort. The trouble is, unlike standard video or even film, it's not simply a matter of getting the right lighting and recording away. Each and every frame is affected by the adjacent ones, and those frames that are greatly different from the preceding ones need extra, personalised attention to ensure that a decent quality of recording is maintained. Naturally, the time and efforts of suitably trained expert encoders is far from cheap, and that is why Commodore's Seal demo does not really fully reflect the capabilities of the machine.

THE PHILIPS CONNECTION

Commodore's arch rivals in the interactive CD arena are Philips Interactive Entertainment who in fact brought out their own MPEG compatible unit several months ago. However, because the MPEG1 standard had not yet been finalised by the industry, all the films released by Philips do not comply fully with this standard and therefore will not run on other MPEG systems. Philips uses what has been dubbed the 'green book standard'.

Imagine our surprise then, when as an idle gesture we inserted a Philips movie into our FMV CD32 and IT WORKED! In fact, every Philips movie we tried, worked perfectly. I don't know how they did it, but Commodore have even managed to build in green book compatibility into their card!

This is truly excellent news because it means that right away, CD32 FMV owners have access to the full library of 50 Philips films, so they can begin enjoying their unit immediately, rather than waiting for white book standard stuff to be released.



COMMODORE RUBS SEGA'S NOSE IN IT

Despite enjoying healthy sales for their own MegaCD CD–based console, Sega bosses have looked decidedly twitchy whenever the CD32 is mentioned.

As if it weren't enough for Commodore to produce the best and most exciting CD console in the world, they even decided to ram the message home with a message aimed squarely at Sega's European corporate headquarters.

In a piece of unrivalled pre–Christmas humour, Commodore managed to book the massive billboard sight outside Sega's HQ. They used it to run a CD32 ad which parodies Sega's 'To be this good takes .... ' magazine and television adverts.

Although the reaction of Sega's Managers is not available for the record, an unconfirmed source yesterday reported that a mystery bidder had purchased the billboard sight for the next 200 years.

» World of COMMODORE AMIGA Toronto 93

The eleventh annual World Of Commodore Amiga show took place in Toronto in early December, attracting Amiga users from both Canada and the United States. This time, though, the Amiga was upstaged by its CD cousin as it made its North American debut.

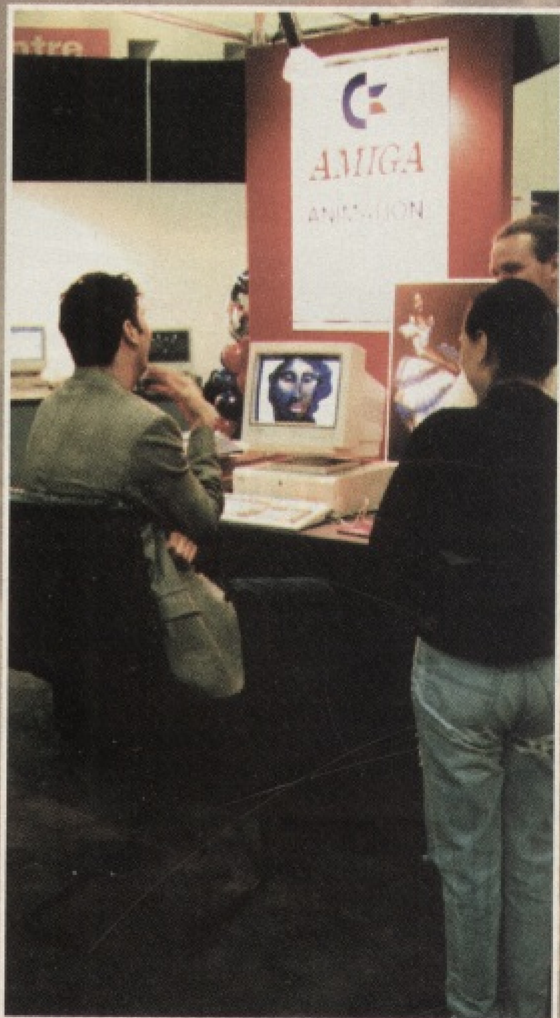
Despite its relatively high price tag of $399, the Amiga still sold like hot cakes, with hardly any remaining by the end of the show. Commodore only had a few Amigas remaining in inventory. Although according to Commodore executives, additional shipments were being held at a customs station in the U.S. waiting for clearance. CD32 sales drove software sales as dealers sold all the special CD software they had available, with Gremlin's *Zool* easily being the star performer.

Almost every demonstration, seminar, lecture, and keynote was attended by a standing-room-only audience. Jim Sachs awed Amiga fans and artists as he demonstrated Digital Creation's *Brilliance*! with his own large array of art projects. Seminars were held by GVP, Rombo, Axiom, Soft-Logik, Migraph, Scala, Electronic Arts, and Commodore on subjects ranging from videographics to desktop publishing.

COMMODORE

Outside of a tremendous amount of CD32 units for hands-on play, Commodore showed nothing of the new equipment in preparation. Commodore's booth was filled instead with a large variety of application programs and demonstrations. Artists, musicians, and young videophiles filled the Commodore booth with a variety of exciting examples of their work on the Amiga. Commodore Canada continued their tradition of creating a multi-grade art contest throughout the event.

Artists and musicians gave demonstrations of the Amiga's capabilities.



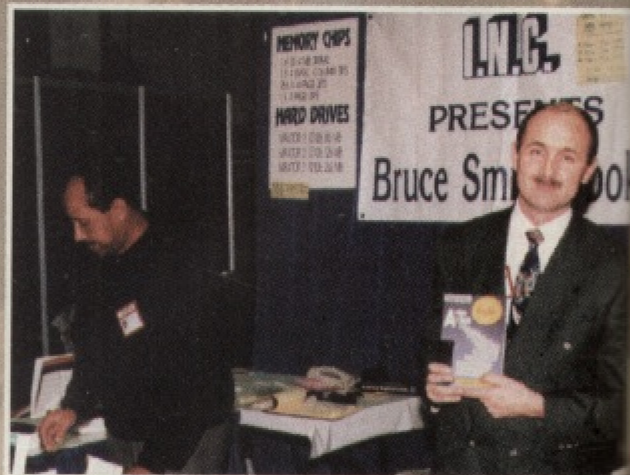
Commodore's Vice President of Engineering Lew Eggebrecht gave a keynote address before a standing room-only audience. His discussions centred mainly on the introduction of CD32, but he also mentioned facts about the latest developments at CBM. His CD32 comments centred on CD32's flexibility and its compatibility with current Amigas.

Mr. Eggebrecht also stated: "We are in volume production of CD32s and it is going very, very, well." He gave several glowing quotes from European magazines concerning CD32 and mentioned that a Gallop survey in the U.K. rated CD32 the number one CD platform in sales. In head-to-head competition between the CD-based platforms, Electronic Monthly Buyers Guide chose CD32 over 3D0 and CD-i. Mr. Eggebrecht said Commodore was aiming to reduce the cost of the CD32 by as much as $100 in order to maintain its competitiveness.

As well as launching the console, Commodore also took the opportunity to demonstrate the CD32's MPEG ability, Chris Ludwig of CATS presented a portion of Paramount's *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*. When the movie was placed on pause, the picture was rock steady. The disk was a Philips video disk but the CD32 has been designed to play both the industry standard Video CD and CD-i's own Video CD-i. In addition, the "Mad Scientist" television advertisement used in the U.K.'s CD32 marketing campaign received a large round of applause.

Even more exciting was the latest news on the AAA chip set. Mr. Eggebrecht stated that the first silicon chips had been created and were in testing. The chips displayed over 95% functionality. Almost all the functions have been tested; and, with only a few small bugs, the architecture has been proven. All the chips will be returned for a second silicon run by the end of January. If that second silicon run is successful, the first AAA machines could be on the market as early as the fall of 1994.

The AAA chip set should give the Amiga a performance boost with a factor of 10 over the current AA chip set. These chips will be used in a new system with a modular processor approach. One target is to do 3-D rendering in real time. They hope to render 30 million pixels per second. To accomplish this, they are building their own 3-D



Bruce Smith soaks up the rays and brings his Insider Guide series to North America.

pipeline and incorporating their own RISC processor in the graphics subsystem.

For the AAA system, they have selected the Intel PCI bus for a system bus. This would allow Commodore to access a wide array of possible peripheral boards and display devices. When asked about the AAA chip system's sound capability, Mr. Eggebrecht stated: 'The sound capabilities of the AAA chip set contains eight voices, 16 bits with 100 kHz sampling rate.' Commodore will design the AAA chip set system to be compatible with a 68060 with eventual upgrade ability to a RISC processor capability.

A cost-reduced design for the Amiga 4000 has been produced and will be in manufacturing by February. The 4000 Tower has also been upgraded in its priority to be completed as soon as possible.

Additionally, it was also revealed that CBM is creating the CD-ROM drive for the Amiga 1200 and the Amiga 4000. The Amiga 4000 CD-ROM will incorporate the full-motion video adaptor. The Amiga DSP effort has been licensed to a third



Scala were there in force, drawing the crowds with an enormous video wall.

party for further development. DSP will also be incorporated into the motherboard of the AAA platform. CBM has been able to arrange a license with Philips for photo CD. Photo CD should be available in the first quarter of the next year. And he stated, there were plans to enlarge his staff to handle the additional workload.

On Saturday night, Commodore Canada presented a video tape that was produced during the show. The tape was created by Howard Gross and his students of the Stephen Leacock Collegiate Institute to demonstrate what the students and the Amiga were able to accomplish. They had interviewed a variety of exhibitors throughout the show and each commented on how well the show was attended and how well business was going. It appeared there were no losers in this year's event. The next World of Commodore Amiga scheduled in New York, April 8-10, 1994.

BMD (BRITISH MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS)

Keeping the British flag flying, BMD had a large area in the front of the hall for game manufacturers and other Amiga companies. Gremlin Graphics, Millenium Software, Mindscape International, Moonlighter Software, Team17, and Virgin Software were represented with hands-on displays that allowed attendees to play the vendors' latest releases.

EXPERT SERVICES

EP had their latest art package, *Picasso II RTG*, on show. Representatives state the Amiga will be able to run all the latest software at resolutions of up to 1280 x 1024 with 256 colours on-screen. Picasso II also supports custom screen modes with up to 16.7 million colours at resolutions as high as 800 x 600.

GREAT VALLEY PRODUCTS

On display at GVP's stand were the TBCPlus, an internal broadcast-quality video processing card; the A1291 SCSI Kit, an expansion module for their Performance Series II; and the A1230 Turbo+ Performance Series II, an accelerator for the Amiga 1200. The TBCPlus operates as an infinite window time-base corrector using 8-bit 4:2:2 CCIR-601 professional quality all digital video signal processing. It is to ship on Dec. 6, 1993, with a MSRP of $949, or on January 13, 1994, with the optional SMPTE/EBU time-code receiver/generator with a MSRP of $1,049.

GVP's A1291 SCSI Kit module adds a high-performance external DMA SCSI interface to a Performance Series II peripheral and uses the latest in active termination technology for stable, noise-free SCSI data transfer. MSRP is $99. GVP's A1230 Turbo+Performance Series II features a 50MHz 68030 (with MMU), up to 32Mb of RAM expansion capability, battery-backed real-time clock, and feature connector for modular expansion. MSRP for the MHz 40/0/4 is $549 and $749 for the MHz 50/0/4.

SCALA

Putting the Amiga to good use, Scala were running their Multimedia MM300 on a full-scale video wall in the front of the exhibition hall. Multimedia MM300 comes with a suite of new features: File Requester or 'Shuffler' showing thumbnails of animations, pictures, and brush files; drawing tools allowing you to create and manipulate lines, rectangles, and circles; fast Floyd-Steinberg dithering; a new function called Absolute Timing giving total control of the timing of a script; Optimise Palette function, which automatically calculates the optimal colour palette for a page when several pictures, brushes, and text colours are used on the same page; resizing of brushes and pictures so that when imported, they can be resized freely; and several other features.

The Scala Echo EE100 is also available for professional, one-pass video editing to be used with the MM300. Available early in 1994 is Scala's new Video Editor VE500. Traditional video editing techniques can be performed through the Human Touch interface, and the full functionality of the Multimedia MM300 is built in.

DKB

DKB used the show to unveil its new 1240™ Accelerator, a 32-bit board capable of accommodating up to 128Mb of RAM, a 68030 accelerator upgradeable to 68882, a 50MHz math coprocessor, MMU and a SCSI interface. MSRP about $425, to be available February 14, 1994. DKB was also displayed their 4091 fast SCSI II hard drive controller for the Amiga 4000. A DKB executive stated that although the product was not officially introduced, DKB would ship the board in the first quarter of 1994 at a MSRP of $549.

Sharing DKB's booth was Phantom Development, which announced the upcoming release (second quarter of 1994) of PRO-MIX, a software-controlled audio mixing board for the Amiga. This new product provides five stereo input pairs with volume, balance, mute, and stereo/mono controls. An ARexx interface is provided to allow PRO-MIX to be utilised in multimedia presentations, or integrated into advanced A/V systems. MSRP is $299.99.

US CYBERNETICS

Although U.S. Cybernetics was listed as an exhibitor, a last minute hitch made it impossible for them to demonstrate their new software. A representative of U.S. Cybernetics apologised for their no-show. However, The Warp System parallel processing accelerator, announced at the Pasadena WOCA in September, will be available in the 30mips and up version in early January 1994. While the Warp 200mips and up system will be available at the end of the first quarter '94. The representative stated that the company has been inundated with calls since their early announcement with some of the interest originating from Hollywood production companies.

SUNRIZE STUDIOS

Sunrize Studios promoted their Studio 16 – a high-fidelity audio card bundled with object-oriented software, in live demonstrations. The product features state-of-the-art digital non-linear editing, eight-track hard disk recording, 16-bit CD-quality sound, and more. Available as an option is a SMPTE Output Module.

INOVATRONICS

INOVAtronics announced their upgrade of the authoring system CanDo to 2.5 with enhancements including AGA graphics, stereo music files, ASL Commodore Requesters, and a clearly laid out Window Editor.

Also on show was Edge, a powerful, easily configurable ASCII-only text editor that, among other features, can open on the Workbench screen, "fold" large sections of text out of view, help you prevent syntax errors while writing *ARexx* and *C* code, and automatically block-indent paragraphs for ease of programming.

SOFT-LOGIC PUBLISHING CORPORATION

For DTP enthusiasts, Soft-logic had an in-depth preview of *PageStream 3.0* at the Toronto show. It's a completely new version of their desktop publishing program with high-end colour separations and more. New features include trapping and plate control, dual paragraph and character style system, a more flexible toolbox, auto kerning and hyphenation, spot and process colour, translation of ProPage documents, and more. The *PageStream 3.0* publishing system comes with the *PageLiner 2.0* text editor and the BME 2.0 bitmap editor. These programs are linked to *PageStream* with the included HotLinks 2.0. The new TypeSmith 2.0 (MSRP: $199.95) can load, save, edit, and generate bitmap screen fonts and it offers a new magnify tool, edit bitmap tool, and a new status bar which displays short help prompts.

»

Help and advice on using the Amiga was available all over the show.



RSC MANAGEMENT

The star of this stand was X-Calibur, a 128Mb memory expansion/acceleration board that accepts standard 72 pins SIMM's modules. with its innovative memory design, the X-Calibur outperforms the regular A4000/040 memory access by 400% at 25MHz. The board does not require a Zorro slot and designers were claiming a three to five times faster memory access than a standard Amiga 4000. The MSRP for the 25MHz version will be $1199 and a 33MHz version is planned at approximately $1600. John Chang from Scala tested the system during the show and stated, 'This thing is really cooking.'

HEIFNER COMMUNICATIONS

In conjunction with Express-Way Software, Heifner displayed their software utility PEGGER. PEGGER (MSRP: $99.95) is a fully-integrated JPEG utility which allows programs that don't support JPEG images to use them automatically. PEGGER features *ARexx* support; support for 24-bit IFF, SCTV, Toaster Framestore, and HAM8 images; adjustable priority for JPEG compression and decompression.

Also being displayed by Heifner was the Toaster Cozzy 4000 (MSRP: $449.95). This product prevents the toasterboard from possibly shorting out the motherboard due to contact. The built-in power supply prevents overheating/blown power supplies in the A4000.

AXIOM SOFTWARE

Up and running on Axiam's stand were Anim Workshop, WaveMaker, and WaveLink. Anim Workshop (MSRP $149.95) provides you with a set of tools for creating, playing, processing, editing, and adding sound to your Amiga animations. WaveMaker allows you to a create network-quality logo animation in less than five minutes and retails for $249.95 MSRP. WaveLink allows anyone who has two Video Toaster systems to use both for rendering. WaveLink includes a cable that hooks your two systems together so both can render at the same time. It also allows one system to see the other so file sharing is quick and easy. WaveLink retails for $149.95 MSRP.

AREA 52

To help out anyone who gets stuck halfway through a task on their Amiga, Area 52 were showing off its Amiga Online Reference Manual v2.1. Area52 considers its hypertutorial a book in itself, of over 850 online hypertext pages of information in approximately 1.1Mb of data. Information covers topics such as the Amiga custom hardware and its specifications, the operating system including *ARexx* and *AmigaDOS 3.0*, the *Workbench*, third-party software, and commonly-asked questions. Version 2.1 retails for $34.95 plus $2 shipping. Special offer for user group members of $20 plus $2 shipping.

MEDIA INNOVATIONS

Media Innovations' new utility program *FramePro* provides direct software control of ASDG's *ADPro*, allowing the user to batch-process an entire range of frames from one format to another with a few mouse clicks.

In conjunction with *ADPro*, *FramePro* will crop, brighten, colour correct, and further process the frames while simultaneously writing them to RAM, storage devices, or even DPS's Animation Board.

FAGO ELECTRONICS

Fargo was demonstrating its low-cost, high-quality Primera Colour Printer. Use Primera with your favourite programs like *Brilliance*, *ADPro*, *OpalVision*, and nearly all other Amiga software that uses the Amiga Preferences driver. A dye-sublimation upgrade kit is also available that produces true continuous-tone, photo-quality images.

ADVANCED SYSTEMS

Not much to see on this stand apart from the FASTLANE Z3 SCSI-II controller. This expansion device features a Fast SCSI-II controller with 32-bit DMA as well as 32-bit wide memory expansion up to 64Mb on one full-length Zorro-3 slot card.

PRE'SPECT TECHNICS INC

Pre' Spect demonstrated their NakeD-Up RETINA Interface (MSRP $75.00) for the Amiga 500. With this interface, 500 users can now work with the RETINA Interface and 24-bit graphics. The NakeD-Up is available for other A2000 cards for use on the A500 and A1000 as long as the Amiga 2000 card does not require the Amiga 2000's special CPU or video slots.

DIGITAL CREATION

To demonstrate the power of Brilliance!, Digital Creations flew in top Amiga artist Jim Sachs to knock out animations on the fly. Meanwhile Jim Drew of Utilities Unlimited was surrounded by interested Amiga fans as he demonstrated the Emplant board with Macintosh emulation. There was a rumour circulating that one vendor plans to incorporate the Emplant into Amiga 4000s and sell them as full functioning dual machines. Release dates for IBM emulation is scheduled for the first quarter of 1994. An A1200 Emplant is also in development.



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» COMMODORE WRITES

I feel fortunate to be at the Commodore helm during these genuinely exciting times. As I write this column we're about to ship the long-awaited full motion video module. Ever since we first launched Amiga CD32 back in July there's been a tremendous sense of anticipation about what FMV capability could do for our excellent product. We launched a few weeks after agreement was reached by the world's entertainment giants - Sony, Philips, Matsushita and others including Commodore – on an agreed FMV standard. This is, of course, MPEG1 (or Video CD or Karaoke CD or White Book!).

I am certain of the potential of FMV to transform the entertainment industry and elevate Amiga CD32 to a key role in the transformation. Now that the five inch CD has established itself as the accepted storage medium for information it's obvious that Hollywood and the record industry should agitate for technology which gives them new money-earning angles. In the future I'm sure we'll see fascinating new forms of home entertainment emerge from FMV – games with real actors rather than sprites, movies with multiple plot lines, videos with textual information on their production. There are a huge number of possibilities.

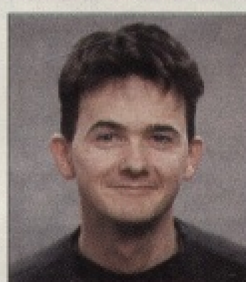
We are building up good relationships with software manufacturers such as RCA/Victor (BMG) and EMI (PMI). So we should be. There are intense rivalries in these industries. Many companies are in competition with Philips and welcome the arrival of a competitor such as Commodore. With more movies due soon from Warner and Paramount and games publishers like Mindscape, Round One Media and Alternative working on FMV games I think we're at the crest of a tidal wave. I'm glad we're riding it.

DPAINT KEYBOARD TEMPLATES

No–one can be expected to remember all of *DPaint*'s keyboard shortcuts, but now there's no need to, as Software Solutions are producing keyboard overlays to solve just that problem. The plastic strip fits over the function keys giving you instant reference to all the keystrokes and shortcuts *DPaint* 4.1–4.5 AGA (and you'd be surprised to find out just how many shortcuts there are!). The overlay fits all Amiga keyboards except the A600, and is priced at $9.95. Contact A&P Solutions in the USA on 0101 94545 1126.



CU'S BELOVED EDITOR IN SHOCK RESIGNATION



In an announcement which left the industry reeling this month, CU AMIGA's Editor and longest standing staff member resigned to take up a position on another magazine. Despite tearful pleas from the bosses of EMAP to stay, Dan was resolute in his decision saying that he, 'Wanted to whip those whelps at Future into some kinda shape'. He then pulled his Fedora low over his brow, p–tinged a last fond greenie into the CU spittoon and swaggered out out without a backward glance.

Dan has gone to edit PC Format, a magazine apparently specialising in an obscure computer called the PC. Personally, I don't think it'll ever catch on, but Dan does love a challenge! We wish him luck.

NEPTUN GENLOCK

A new genlock is on the way from Electronic Design in Germany. Fishily named the Neptun, it's possibly the first software controllable genlock for the Amiga. Other key features include advanced Alpha channel handling, which Electronic Design say will help with anti–aliasing graphics to reduce the jaggies where computer graphics border live video.

Videographers should also note the release of the TBC Enhancer, a time base corrector for synchronising two video sources. There are inputs for two sources: S–VHS (in Y–C format) and composite video. These are then split into their components and digitised in studio quality 4:2:2 standard. The signal, converted into a digital colour decoder in Y–U/V is then put into screen memory, where it's corrected and read out of memory with a crystal–precise pulse rate.

Both products are available from Electronic Design in Germany on 010 49 89 354 530.

RUMOURS OF OUR DEATH...

Lips began to quiver. Strong cups of tea were duly handed out. For a moment, it looked like the unthinkable had happened and Thalion had gone toes up. To quote from a press release received from Blue Byte software, the authors of *Battle Isle* and *The Settlers*, to name but a couple of games. "The former creative and development team (Erik Simon, Jurie Hornemann, Thorsten Mutschall, Christian Jungen and Tobias Franz) of Thalion, who created products like *Dragonflight, Wings Of Death, Trex Warrior, Amberstar, No Second Prize, Lionheart* and of course *Ambermoon*, will be employed at Blue Byte from January 2nd."

Don't cry too hard, though, as this is not actually the end of Thalion, more a transition from a development house to a publishing and distribution company. Although Thalion no longer have a in-house programming team, they will still be releasing third party developed software, such as *A320 Night Approaches, AMbermoon* and *Air Sea Rescue*. CD32 conversions of Lionheart and No Second Prize are imminent, but a sequel to the latter in "In some doubt", according to Thalion's UK representative Tony King. The team that have gone to Blue Byte are the team responsible for the original, and without them, the chances of the promised follow up with full texture mapping etc, look tiny. We'll bring you more as soon as we have it.

INCIDENTALLY...

Something crawling around inside Dillon's word processor last issue meant that the telephone number of the animation college in Dublin featured in the animation feature was missed out. If you want to contact the college, write to:
Senior College
Ballyfermot
Dublin 10, Ireland
Tel: 010 353 1 626 9421

JOIN THE SQUAD... PLAY AMIGA HITS

MAXIS

ARTDINK

A-TRAIN

TRAINS
CREATE A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

CITIES
MASTERMIND A METROPOLIS

MONEY
BUILD A FINANCIAL EMPIRE

THE (RAIL) ROAD TO RICHES ! Cities all over the world are masses of idling, polluting, honking cars.
We need mass transit - but local, state and national governments haven't been able to make it work.
If you can create and operate a successful privately held mass transit operation, you'll do the world a service and reap huge financial rewards - but that's only the beginning....

"Exciting graphics & tons of gameplay." AMIGA ACTION
"One of the best strategy games available." AMIGA POWER

17.99



A-TRAIN

JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL™

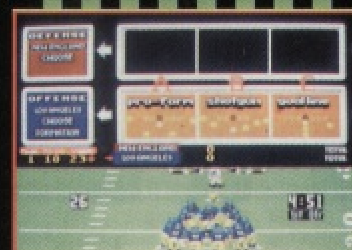
ELECTRONIC ARTS

All the hard-hitting action of real American Football. The scrolling 3D playfield captures the speed of the real game, with total control of any player, from quarterback to kicker. IsoVision™ passing camera zeroes in on receivers racing down the field - choose plays with ease from Madden's on-screen playbook.

* Block tackles, dive, jump and 'sack' the quarterback !
* Real weather conditions - tough it out in the rain, mud and snow.
* 1 or 2 players - play head-to-head.

"The best American Football game on the market..."
"... what more can I say but brilliant." AMIGA COMPUTING - 90%

12.99



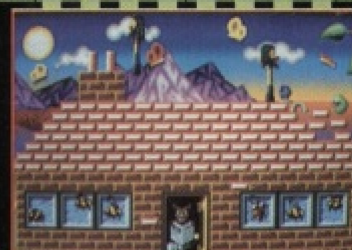
JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL

12.99

WIZKID

WIZBALL got married, and had a kid....WIZKID ! And just like his pop, he can't resist a challenge.
Nifta, the feline family friend, has been catnapped, along with Wizball and Wizard. They've all been thrown into the dungeons of Zark's castle - except Nifta, who has been imprisoned in the Turtle Jail. Got all that? Good, and that is just the start of your adventure in this totally original...well, it's kinda cute, a bit of arcade... yeh, it's the best bott'em up on the software scene. Go for it! Gorge yourself on a feast of crazy, zany graphics and a gameplay that will have your joystick pleading for mercy and your ma screaming "Your dinner's still hot 'cos the bin's on fire!"

"Very addictive & challenging." CU AMIGA - 90%
"Exciting, excellent... this offers hours of fun."



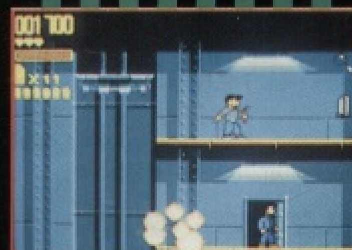
WIZKID

9.99

LETHAL WEAPON

TWO COPS - BOTH LETHAL !
A multi-level shoot 'em up based on aspects of all three Lethal Weapon movies. You can choose to be either one of the two high fire-power cops.... each having his individual strengths - and weaknesses !
There are many missions to complete, including the rescue of a kidnapped girl, the pursuit and arrest of drugs runners, finding and arresting a police murderer, plus many more. You choose the level to suit your objectives within the gameplay. It's mean, fast and...LETHAL !

Very addictive & challenging. CU AMIGA - 90%
"Exciting, excellent... this offers hours of fun."



LETHAL WEAPON



HIT SQUAD
2 CASTLE STREET · CASTLEFIELD
MANCHESTER · M3 4LZ
TELEPHONE: 061 832 6633
FAX: 061 834 0650

Screen shots taken from various computer formats



COVERDISK 74

Scala Home Titler **is one of the best programs CU AMIGA has ever given away. Tony Horgan takes you on a step-by-step guided tour of the program.**

SCALA INSTRUCTIONS

QUICKSTART GUIDE TO LOADING DISK 74

Write Protect disk 74. You'll need three disks, which you do not have to format.

1. Insert Disk 74 into the internal drive and turn on the Amiga.
2. Double click the CUDISK74 icon.
3. Double click each of the SCALA, GRAPHICS and SCIENCE icons in turn. Each one will need to be expanded onto a disk of its own. Follow the on-screen instructions.
4. See this month's DIY section (Workshop) for information on the *Parnet* program.



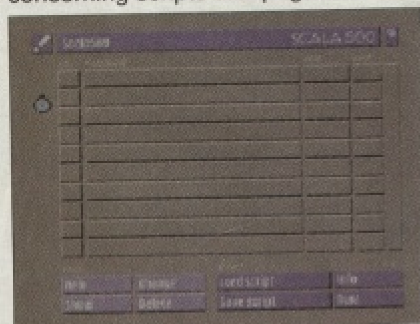
Use Scala HT100 for titling your home videos or for creating presentations.

Scala Home Titler is a video titler. The obvious use is for titling home videos, although with a bit of imagination you should be able to find a number of other jobs for it within your video productions. *Scala Home Titler* is an incredibly easy program to use, and you've probably got the hang of the basics already, but to make sure you get off on the right foot, here's our simple step-by-step guide.

Follow the directions in the "How to load disk 74" box to decompress your *Scala* disk. Load the *Scala* disk by inserting it into the internal drive and turning on the Amiga.

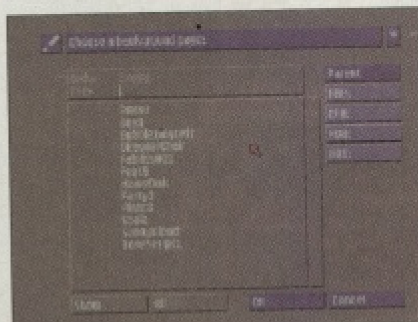
STARTING OUT

Once *Scala* has loaded, you'll be presented with a blank script screen. This menu contains a list of the pages in the script, and the buttons concerning scripts and pages.



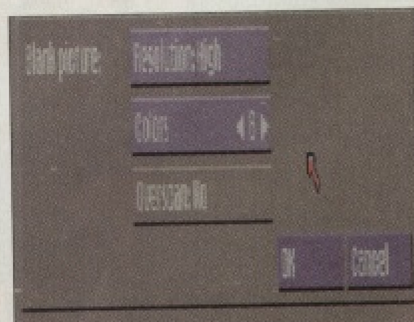
The menu contains a list of pages in the script.

The first thing you need to do is create a page, which is done by clicking the 'New' button. A file requester will appear (insert the Graphics disk and click on DF0:), asking you to select a background image for the page. Not all of the files are background images files, so we'll select Naivedisk for now. Double click the mouse on the Naivedisk filename to load it.



Click on New button to create a page.

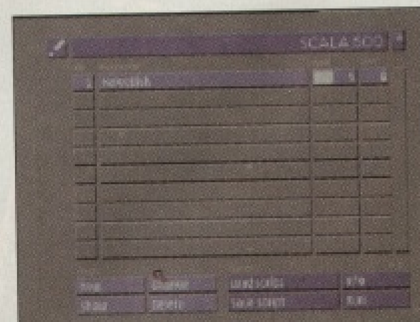
If you click OK without selecting a filename, you'll set up the page with a blank background. The number of colours and resolution can be altered from the control panel. Overscan should be selected if you want to place text or graphics that extend beyond the edges of the TV picture, rather than being confined by the usual border that runs around the inside of the screen.



If you click on OK without selecting a filename you'll set up the page with a blank background..

Once you've selected your background picture, click OK twice, which will return you to the script screen. You should now be able to see the Naivedisk screen sitting in slot number one of the script menu.

Scala names its pages automatically, taking the filename of the background image, or the first line of text that you enter on that page.



To look at the picture click on naivedisk name.

To look at the picture, click the Change button and then click on the Naivedisk name. On the bottom of the screen you'll see a few buttons containing various words and icons. Clicking the right mouse button will remove the panel to display the entire picture. Pressing it again brings the panel back.

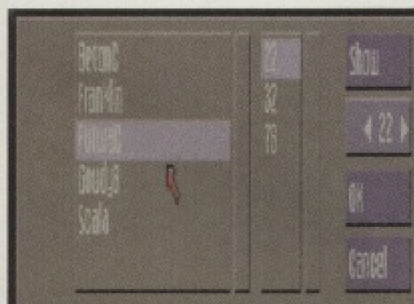
ADDING TITLES

As this is a video titler, we may as well get to work on producing some titles. Click on the button marked



Font: followed by the name of the currently selected font. This brings up the font selector. There are four different styles included on the disk, available in a number of different sizes. Highlight a font and click on the 'Show' button to take a look at it. When you've found one you're happy with, click on OK.

On the background picture you'll see an oblong cursor. You can position this anywhere on screen by dragging it with the mouse. Enter your text with the keyboard, using the normal cursor keys a delete keys to rectify any mistakes.



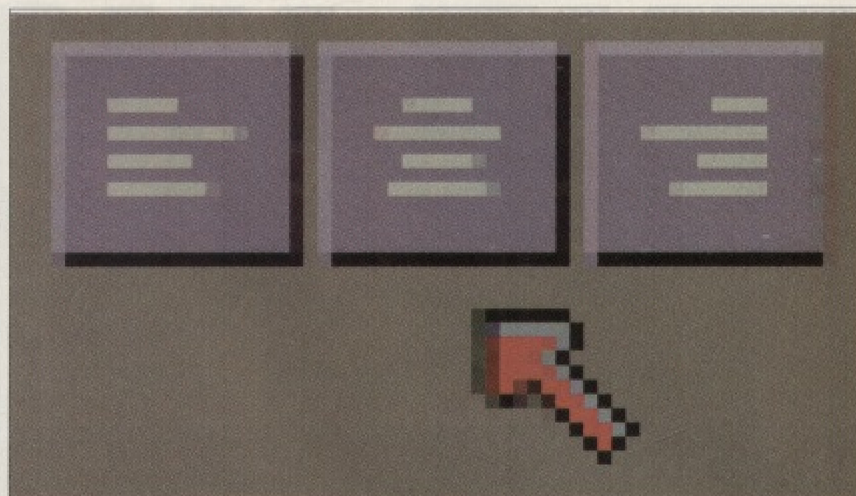
There are four styles to choose from.

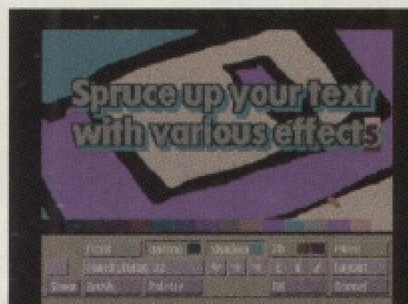
If you're not happy with the positioning after the text once you've entered it, you can use the 'Move' option to relocate it. Highlight the text by holding down the left mouse button and dragging the box across it. Click on the 'Move' button, and you can place it anywhere else on the screen.



Use the justification buttons to align the text.

If it's just the formatting of the text you want to change, you can use the justification buttons to change the line from ragged left, ragged right or centred.





There are many special effects available for text changes.

TEXT CONTROL

Changing the colour of the text is simple. Choose a colour from the palette that runs across the top of the control panel, clicking on it with the left mouse button. Then click the coloured box in the 'Front' button. Any currently selected text will change colour. To spruce up your text, you can add an outline, shadow or 3D look by merely clicking on the

IF YOUR DISK WON'T LOAD

If your coverdisk doesn't seem to work as it should, then follow this simple guideline. Firstly, remove all unnecessary peripherals, such as printers, modems etc. Follow the instructions of these pages to the letter, and if after that you find that the disk still doesn't work, call the PC Wise helpline on 0685 350505 between 1030 and 1230 Monday to Friday. If they advise you that the disk is faulty, then pop it in an envelope with a covering letter explaining the problems to:

CU DISK RETURNS, PC WISE, DOWLAIS TOP BUSINESS PARK, MERTHYR TYDFIL, MID GLAMORGAN CF46 2YY.

Please include 28p per disk to cover postage and packing (55p for overseas readers). Your disk will be tested and a new, working one dispatched to you as soon as possible. Please note that neither we nor PC Wise accept responsibility for any disk damaged due to negligence on the part of the user.





Above: You can position the cursor anywhere on the screen and key in text using the keyboard as usual.
Right: *Home Titler* provides you with comprehensive text modification options ranging from the outlines to whether it should have shadows, outlines or a 3D effect.

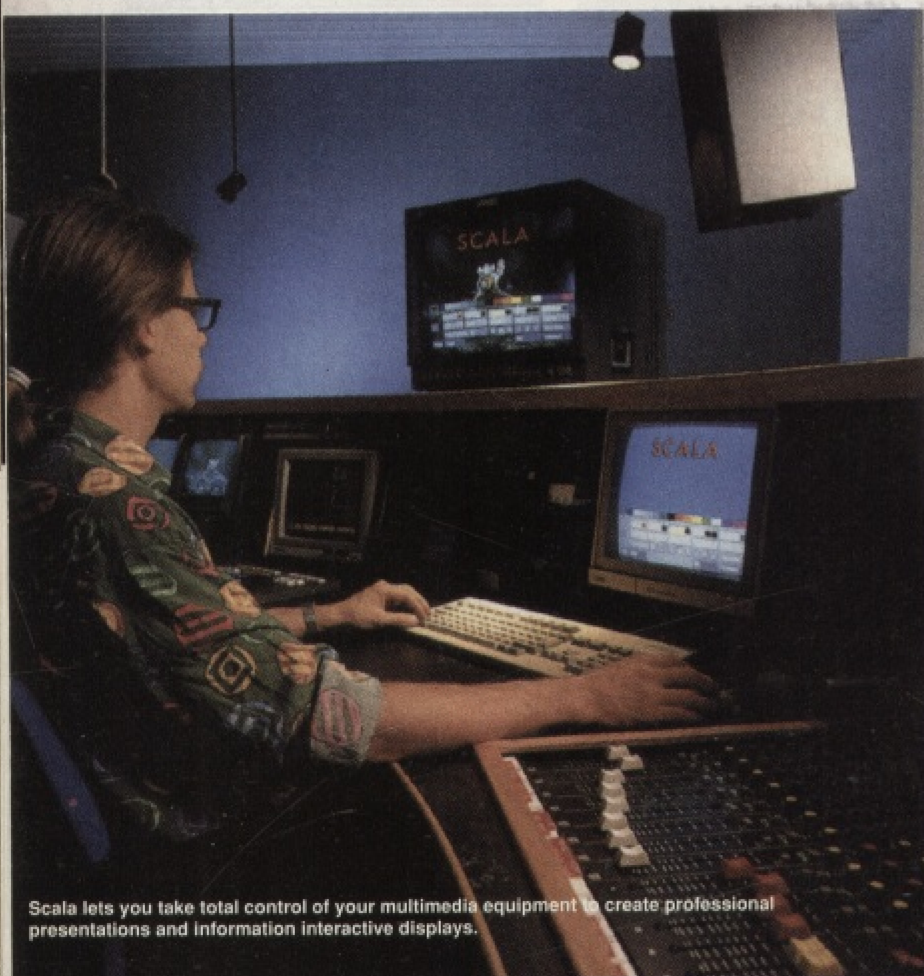
THE WORLD OF SCALA

SPECIAL OFFER!

Scala UK are proud to present an exclusive offer for CU AMIGA readers.

If you've already used this month's cover disk and followed the tutorial in this issue you'll know what a superb program *Scala Home Titler* is. Now if you want to take things a step further you can order the full *Home Titler* manual complete with two extra disks simply bursting at the seams with over 150 extra symbols and additional clip art for use with *Home Titler*. That means that you'll be able to create even more original and interesting titles, as well as learning how to get the very last drop of power from the program! The manual and two disks cost only £14.95, and CU AMIGA readers who take advantage of this unique opportunity will also receive automatic membership to the newly-formed Scala Club.The Scala Club is an organisation dedicated solely to keeping *Scala* product users updated on the latest *Scala* news and innovations. Members will receive a packed magazine and are assured of priority treatment in any future *Scala* promotions!

SCALA MM200 **Scala MM200 is the multimedia tool you've always dreamed of. MM200 gives you the power to unleash your imagination. Its superior functionality and ease-of-use gives you the ability to bring your ideas to life using 15 specially-designed TV typefaces, 80 sophisticated wipes (including stretch, flow, flipcoin and cube), 60 quality backgrounds and 80 ready-made graphic symbols for truly professional results. With MM200 you can integrate many different types of information, such as CD Audio tracks, MIDI music files, animations and single frames, sound samples and even Soundtracker compatible music modules. This information can be retrieved from a variety of sources, including CD ROM, CD Audio, MIDI devices, video players and, of course, disk.**
To find out more about the MM200 or for a free brochure ring Scala UK Ltd on 0929 444 294.



Scala lets you take total control of your multimedia equipment to create professional presentations and information interactive displays.

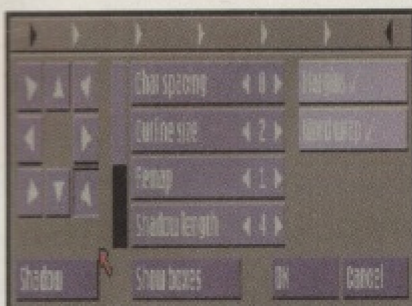






TO FIND OUT MORE... **If *Home Titler* has inspired you, or if you simply want to find out more about the ground breaking uses that the upmarket *Scala* packages are being put to, just send a stamped, addressed A4 sized envelope to Scala UK Ltd and you'll receive issue 1 of the Scala Club magazine (a privilege normally reserved exclusively for Scala product owners.) The magazine tells you about some of the latest products as well as demonstrating the revolutionary uses to which they are being put.**

To avail of this brilliant offer and for further information on any of the Scala products, please contact Scala UK Ltd, Mill Studio, Crane Mead, Ware, Hertfordshire, SG12 9PY. Tel: 0929 444294 Fax: 0920 444230.



For more control over text display click on the layout button to alter spacing, margins etc.

relevant buttons on the control panel. Clicking them a second time takes the effect off. Underline, bold and italic styles are also available from the three buttons marked with a letter.

Should you want even further control over the text display, click on the Layout button to bring up another panel. From here you can alter the character spacing, outline size, shadow direction, margins and word wrap.

BRUSHES

Extra graphics can be loaded in and placed on the page. These are selected by clicking the 'Brush' button, and loading an IFF brush from the disk. Try loading the Director Chair or Amour files. They can then be placed on the page with the mouse. Should you want to delete a brush (or any text for that matter), press the delete key while the object is selected.

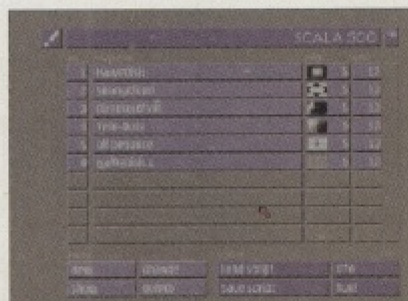


If you've come over all Francis Copolla, you can create your own credits thanks to HT100.


Scala have provided you with a few images and you can create more in your favourite art package.

NEW PAGES

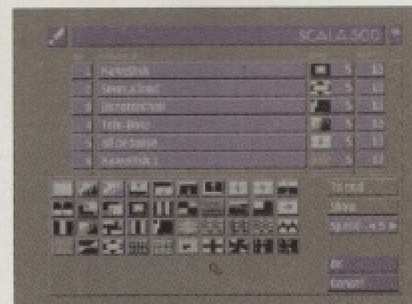
Now you've created a page, you'll probably want to do another. Click the 'New' button, and repeat the process for a new page. To rearrange the order of the pages, just drag them around with the mouse, it's as simple as that.



To rearrange the order of the pages drag them around with the mouse.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Instead of one page changing instantly into the next, you can easily add a range of more attractive fades and wipes. Clicking in the WIPE box of a page (from the main Script Menu), will bring up a bank of 40 wipes, each represented by its own icon. Change the wipe by clicking on a new one. You can change the wipe speed with the speed buttons.



The wipe box has a bank fo 40 wipes. .

LOADING AND SAVING

When you select Load or Save Script, only the script and text is saved, without the actual graphics files. This means that when you run your script, you'll need to have the disks with your graphics files to hand. For this reason, it's a good idea to arrange all your files onto a single disk. Better still, run the whole thing from a hard drive.

HARD DRIVE INSTALLATION

There's a hard drive installation program on the *Scala* disk. First, boot from your hard drive, then insert the *Scala* disk and double click the Install icon. The installation program creates a *Scala* directory on your hard drive, and does all the rest too. Click 'Cancel' when it asks for the Symbols disk and then you're ready for action.

DISK VIRUSES

We try to ensure that viruses do not get on your disks. We always have the most advanced virus checkers available when the disk is compiled and every program goes through rigorous testing. However, we can accept no responsibility for possible damage incurred by viruses which have escaped our attention.

COVERDISK 74

Coverdisk 74 continues with *Weird Science*. As computer users, we are frequently at the cutting edge of technology. Thanks to CU AMIGA and G-Tek, you can explore this world via a series of unique and exciting science programs. Mat Broomfield explains.

WEIRD SCIENCE

This month, we give you *Circular Motion*, the first of twelve programs that will let you perform your own experiments to explore a variety of physics-related science subjects. Each month, we'll be bringing you a different program so that by the end of a year, you'll own a complete library of programs which are both entertaining and educational. Each program in the set is completely unique on the Amiga and has been designed to let you perform experiments which are nearly, or completely impossible to perform in the real world. They're ideal for students, and interesting for non-students.

Remember, CU AMIGA is the only magazine that pays as much attention to your mind as it does to your wallet!

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

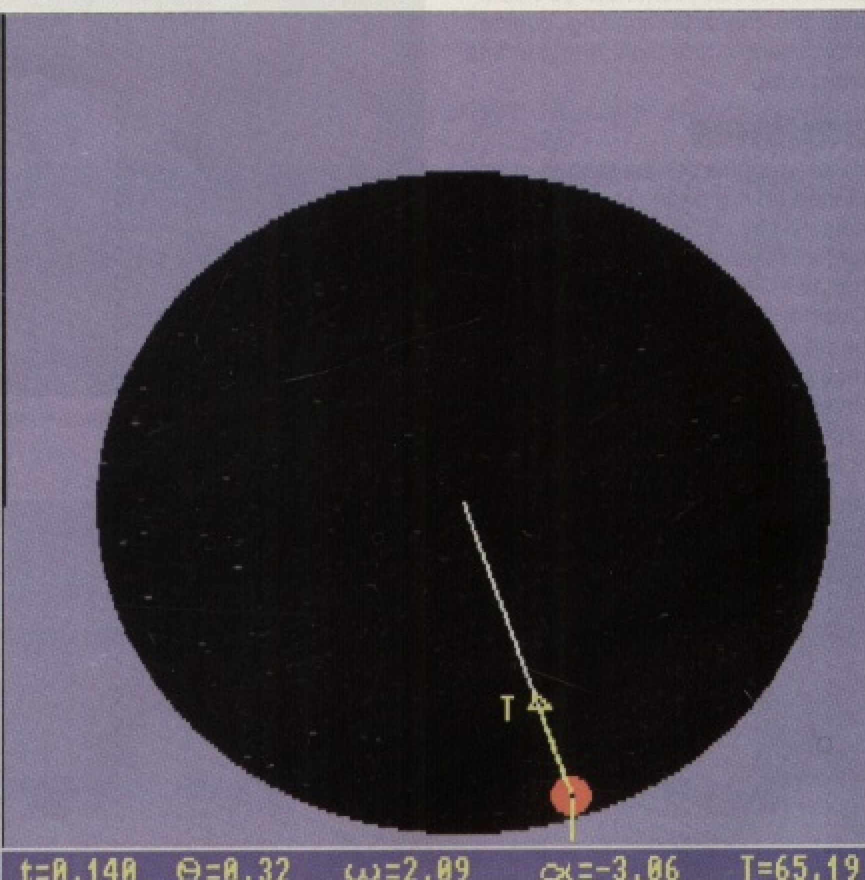
This month's offering, *Circular Motion*, is a program for testing the circular and tangential movement of an object in two dimensional space. You can alter every significant force acting upon the object, ranging from its size and mass, to its initial angular velocity. You choose to have the object moving freely in an enclosed space, or tethered as a pendulum in an open space. You can even free it altogether just to see where it goes!

LOADING THE PROGRAM

Before you can load the program, you'll need to expand it onto its own disk. To do that, simply follow the instructions on page 16 headed 'How to load your disk'.

Once you've created your own stand-alone disk, write protect it then insert it into the internal disk drive. Once it's there, switch your computer off for ten seconds (if its still on) then turn the computer on and the disk will autoboot. You turn the computer off first to flush any erroneous data (or even viruses) out of its memory completely before using a new program.





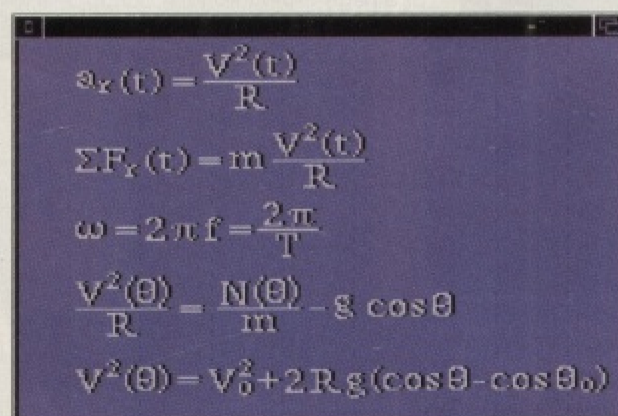
Now you can use your Amiga as a test box to experiment with the forces of *Circular Motion*.

After a few minutes, you'll be presented with the Workbench screen, in the middle of which you'll see an icon labelled '*Circular Motion 3.0'*. Double click on this icon and a window will appear showing you the contents of the disk.

Click on the *'Circular Motion'* icon within this window and the program will load automatically.

USING THE PROGRAM

Once the program's loaded you'll be greeted by the main screen. The majority of this screen is occupied by a large black window. This window is the real-time display where you can see a representation of your experiment as you conduct it. Above and below this window, there are rows of figures whose purpose is to tell the exact values of different elements of your test. Again, these are real-time and will be updated approximately ten times a second once the experiment has commenced.



If you're interested in mathematical theory then wrap your eyes around this lot!

At the left of the screen are the sliders and buttons that you will use to set up the initial conditions for your experiment,as well as allowing you to analyse it at each stage of its . execution.

To quickly see the program in action, press the button labelled 'Free'. The object will start swinging and the numbers above and below it will start to change rapidly.

To stop the object at it its current location, click the 'Free' button again. To reset the experiment to its initial parameters, click the 'Reset' button. You cannot alter the parameters of

an experiment that's either being executed, or which has been paused using the 'Free' button.

To get the most from the program you should continue and read the rest of this reference section.

THE SLIDERS

The sliders at the top left of the screen allow you to specify the initial forces acting upon your object, as well as its own starting parameters. The top slider represents its initial angle in degrees from 0 to 359. 0 is vertically downwards.

The second slider represents the object's initial velocity in metres per second and ranges between 9 and -9 MPS. Negative values mean that the object will begin by moving clockwise, whilst positive ones will cause it to move anti-clockwise.

The third slider represents the radius of the circle in which the object moves. If you choose to confine the object this figure represents the radius of the circle in which it's confined. If you choose not to confine the object, then this figure represents the length of the pendulum 'string'.

The fourth slider controls the object's mass between 1.0 and 10.0 kilograms. The greater the object's mass, the greater its potential inertia. The final slider represents the radius of the object and acceptable values are between 1 and 25 centimetres. Below the sliders are two gadgets containing text. These can not be individually adjusted as they represent a composite of the adjustments to all the all the other sliders.

The first is initial angular inertia and is derived by adjustments to the mass and object radius sliders.

The second gadget shows the angular velocity and is derived using the radius of the object and the radius of its motion path (the third slider).

Beneath the two text gadgets you'll see two dark blue icon gadgets. These let you specify the way in which the object will move. The first of them is for selecting whether the object should be confined or act as a pendulum.

If the object is confined it rolls around the inside edge of a circular 'box'. If it acts as a pendulum, the middle of the object is connected to a central point of the screen and the object swings around that point.

The other gadget lets you define whether the object is moving in the x,y or x,z plane. If it moves in the x,y plane then gravity influences it, whereas in the x,z plane it does not, and so the object moves indefinitely (friction is not accounted for).

THE BUTTONS

There are eleven buttons on the screen below the icon gadgets. Here's a breakdown of what you can expect them to do:

ENERGY — Brings up a window that shows the energy of the moving objects as a series of three graphs.

ROLL — Marks the object with a radius line so that so you can see its angle of rotation as it moves around the inside of the circular track. This only works when the object is being moved in confined mode.

FREE — Starts the object rolling or swinging. If the object is already moving, it pauses its motion so that you can take notes about the forces acting upon it. If the object has been paused, it unpauses it.

RESET — Resets the objects and parameters back to their most recent levels before you clicked Free.

? — Calls up the on-line help window.

Quit — Quits the program.

[string icon] — Instantly disintegrates the 'string' when in pendulum mode. The object travels off the screen at the appropriate tangent leaving a red trail behind it, so that you can analyse its motion.

[tortoise icon] — Slows the action down to one tenth of its normal speed so that you can make more accurate observations, especially of faster moving experiments.

[graph icon] — Allows you to specify and to view a real-time graph of any of the forces involved in the motion of your object.

E=Mc² — Brings up a window showing the formula of circular motion to remind you what they are.

[pencil icon] — In the MS-DOS version of the program, this would present you with questions to solve. However, they have not been implemented in the Amiga version.

In addition to the buttons, there is one final slider in the shape of a red arrow beside the main display window. This is the zero reference point for potential energy and can be moved up or down.



COVERDISK 75

You've seen the review, now play our stunning exclusive demo. We happen to think that *Simon The Sorcerer* is one of the best Amiga graphic adventures ever, and so will you!

SIMON THE SORCERER

If you haven't read our review of *Simon The Sorcerer* on page 68, then you probably don't know just how good it really is. Young Simon has been taken from his own world at the tender age of 12 by a magician Uncle with a magic hat who has dumped him in a parallel universe. Like a trooper, Simon has decided to help out while he's there and rid this world of an evil sorcerer. A silly plot, perhaps, but a great premise for a good adventure.

Not that this has all that much to do with out demo. In our exclusive playable demo, you have a couple of seemingly simple tasks to perform. You start outside a dwarf mine carrying nothing more than a barrel of beer, a beer voucher, a glass jar and a feather, and with these you need to collect some Swamp Stew, a grappling hook and a gem. It all sounds very easy, but there's a lot more to it than that, as you'll soon discover.

Controlling Simon is as easy as any other graphic adventure you care to mention. A row of icons at the bottom of the screen tell Simon which actions to perform, and the top half of the screen indicates Simon's current location. To move Simon around, click anywhere in the top half of the screen, and he'll walk there taking the most direct route. If you want to change your mind at any point, just click anywhere else on the screen and he'll change direction.

The icons themselves are completely straightforward, and should require absolutely no instruction whatsoever. Even so, we're still going to tell you what they do. To use them, click with the left mouse button. The highlighted one is the currently selected action, and the semi-highlighted one is the one underneath the mouse pointer.



Who would have thought a false beard could ever be so useful!



The Beer Cellar. No wonder they're always singing!



The entrance lobby to the Dwarves Mine is heavily guarded.

WALK TO:
Select this, and then click anywhere on the screen to tell Simon where to go. This is the standard selected one, and clicking anywhere that isn't applicable to the currently selected icon causes the selection to revert back to this. For example, if you select 'Pick Up' and then click on empty air, the choice will jump back to 'Walk To" and Simon will walk to that point instead.

LOOK AT:
To get a more detailed explanation of an item on screen or in your inventory, select this with the left mouse button, and then the item . you want Simon to tell you about.

OPEN/CLOSE:
Opens and closes things (what did you expect?). Use on doors before you try to walk through them, and boxes before you look in them.

MOVE:
If you want Simon to push pull or move something, then this is the icon you'll need to use.

»

» **CONSUME:**
Feeling a little hungry? Fancy a pint? The Consume icon tells Simon to fill his face with whatever you select.

PICK UP:
Oh come on...

USE:
For this icon, you need to select two different objects, the first one being used on the second.

TALK TO:
Select this, and a character will start one of the game's charming conversations. For the most part, these will be simple set pieces, with Simon following a pre-programmed course. Occasionally you'll get to join in, at which point you'll be given a set of multiple choice answers to whatever the other character is saying. Think carefully before you answer!

WEAR/REMOVE:
Try it with the beard to find out.

GIVE:
Now this is getting silly.

That should be enough for you to be getting on with. Seasoned adventurers shouldn't find our demo too hard, but if you're having any problems, then you'll find the complete solution somewhere on these two pages.



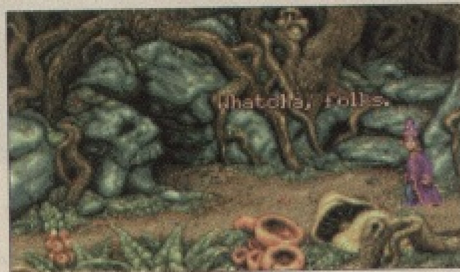
He may look like a child, but Simon is as ruthless as they come. How many 12 year olds would offer bribes?



One of the things you have to collect is a gem. Take your pick!

A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

WARNING: Reading this section can seriously damage your enjoyment of our demo. Still, if you're finding that you can't get through it as easily as you thought you could, here's the complete solution.



First of all, read the Special Demo Information Pamphlet, or you'll never know what you're supposed to do. Wear the beard, to disguise yourself as a dwarf, and then look around the screen until you find the rock. Examine it and pick it up, and enter the Dwarf Mine. You'll be stopped along the way by a dwarf asking for the password. Tell him the password, which is 'Beer' and then walk to the left-hand side of the mine.

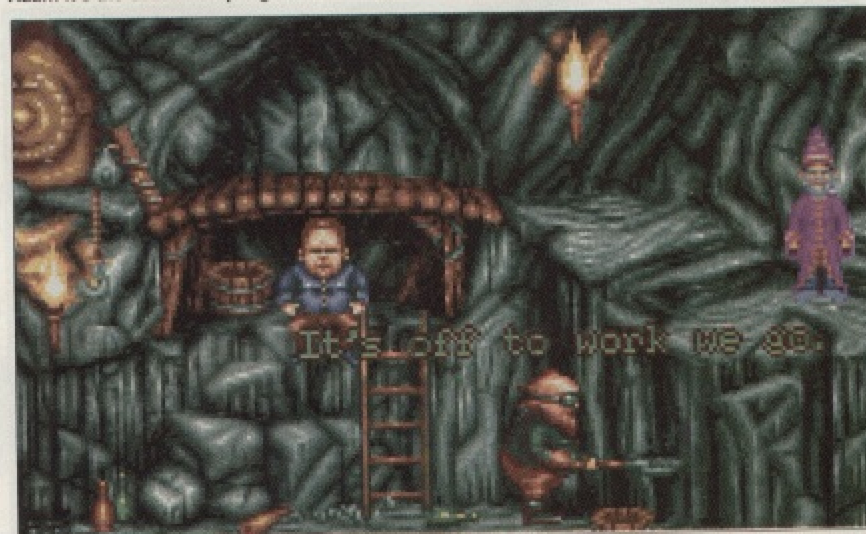
Another dwarf will challenge you, so ask him if he accepts bribes. If he does, give him the barrel of beer. Wait until Simon has placed the barrel in the beer room, and then use the feather on the Dwarf. Collect the key he drops and run up the stairs and on to the left hand side of the screen. Here you'll find the hook.

Use the key on the door and walk over to the next doorway. When the next dwarf challenges you (they're a snotty bunch, aren't they?), tell him you've come to make him an offer, and then tell him that you have something in your inventory that he wants. When we asks what, give him the beer voucher, and praise his pile of gems. Now leave the mine and head for the Swampling's house, which is on the screen to the right of the mine.

Enter the house and let the Swampling talk away. When he's finished, ask if he's some sort of Bogieperson. Act surprised when he tells you it's his birthday, and tell him you'll give his stew a whirl. Eat it, and then ask him for another. While his back is to you, fill the glass container with the stew and have just one more bowlful. Consume the stew, and then move the empty chest. Open the trapdoor you find there, and you've completed our demo!



Aaah! It's the cute Swampling with his nasty stew!



The singing dwarves. See, they had to be there!

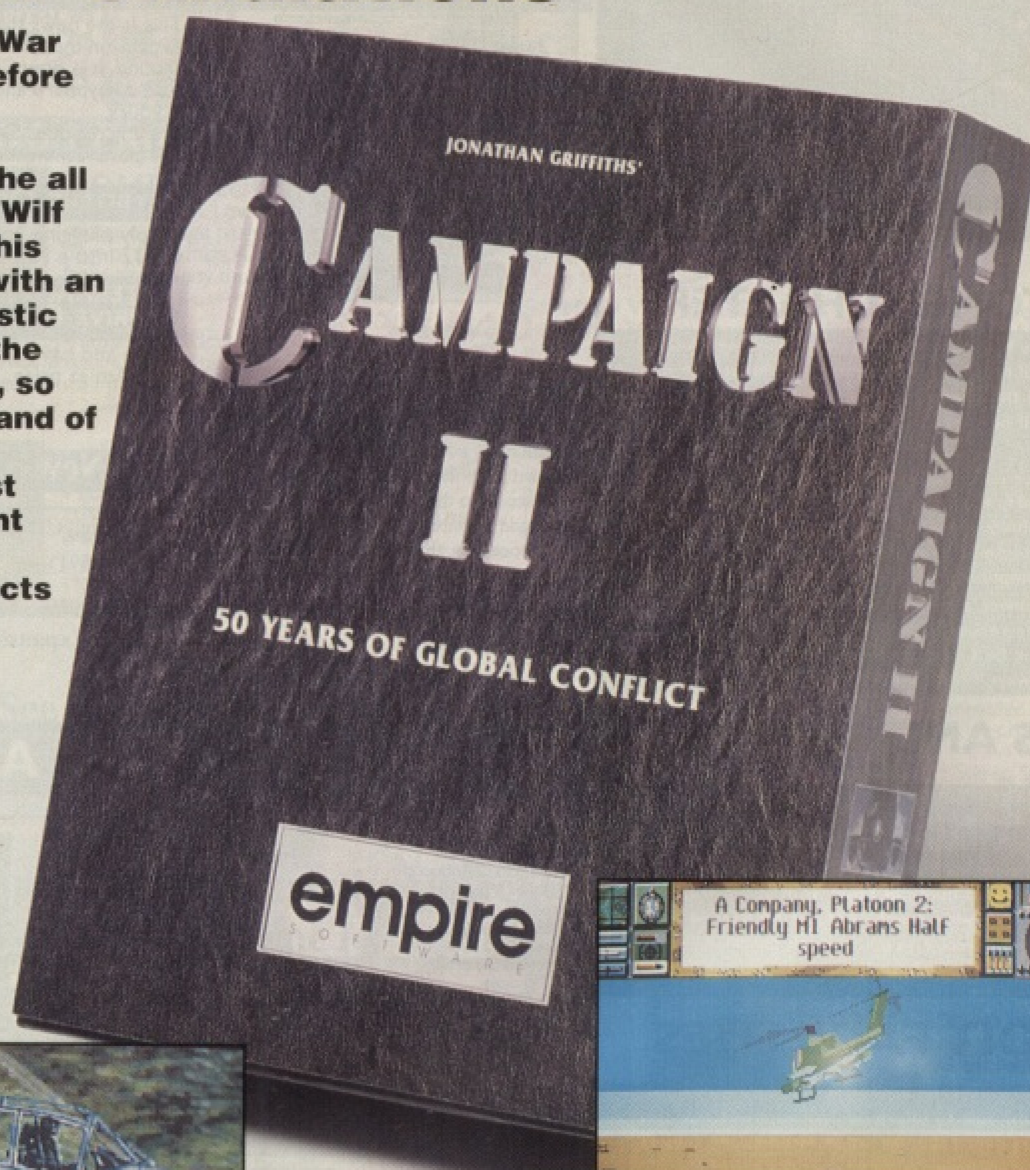
50 YEARS OF GLOBAL CONFLICT

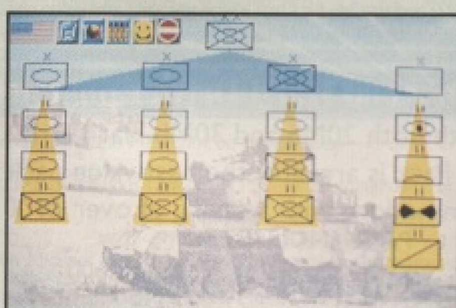
Campaign II heralds a new generation of War Simulations

Campaign II heralds a new generation of War Simulations with more depth than ever before and fabulous real-time 3D action.

The depth to Campaign II is provided by the all new strategy. Expert Military consultant, Wilf Owen, from recent conflicts has brought his knowledge to bear on computer gaming with an end result that looks and feels more realistic than ever before. All aspects involved in the running of an army have been considered, so that now you can place yourself in command of either side, at any level in the chain of command. Over 130 templates of the most significant military forces from 56 different nations of the last 50 years have been included to gain an insight into real conflicts such as Korea, Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm.

The action takes the form of fast 3D graphics if you choose to enter the battlefield in one of the 152 types of military vehicles. APCs and Mobile Artillery, utilise weapons ranging from wire-guided missiles, rockets, homing missiles, and machine-guns supported by laser rangefinders to tracer range-finders, night vision, and gun stabilizers.

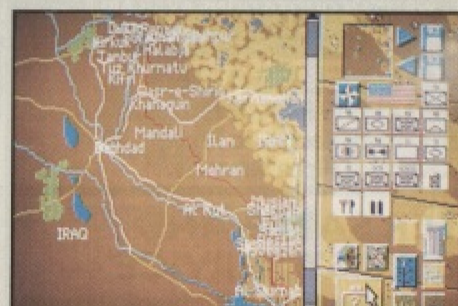












- **Campaign II has emerged as the most comprehensive simulation with new improved strategy, at any level in the Chain of Command (C.o.C.), closely resembling that of a real military situation.**
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Hi,

Did you have an absolutely amazing Christmas and did Santa bring you everything you hoped for? I certainly hope so.
Well folks, it's not easy writing the Indi Column 2 weeks before Christmas to meet deadlines for the January Magazines but here goes.
At the time of writing there seems little doubt that the Amiga Desktop Dynamite pack has been a major success story with Sales exceeding every predic-tion, well done to David Pleasance and his team at Commodore.
Without a doubt the big news has been Commodores decision to add two extra titles to the CD32 Bundle making 4 in total (5 if you buy from Indi).
This week Indi have formally announced the SX1 Expansion module for the CD32 allowing the addition of a keyboard and other peripherals. The impli-cations of this are very important for both existing Amiga owners and potential CD32 buyers.
It is now a real alternative to buy a CD32, add an expansion module and keyboard and effectively own an Amiga 1200 with a CD drive rather than the alternative of buying an Amiga 1200 and then adding the CD32. Developements are moving very quickly in this area. I will keep you up to date with more information next month.

Best wishes

AMIGA CD32

FREE OSCAR, DIGGERS, WING COMMANDER AND DANGEROUS STREETS PLUS INDI EXCLUSIVE FREE LEMMINGS



ONLY £285.99 with 5 great titles

This is the news that all Commodore enthusiasts have been waiting for, the new Microbotics SX1 Expansion module arrives January 1994. The Amiga CD32 is no longer just the best 32 bit CD console around, it is now a fully expandible computer
Add a keyboard and printer increase the memory to 8 Mb, connect to another Amiga and the choice is yours.
The Microbotics SX1 is an internal expansion device that simply connects to your Amiga CD32 via the SXI port. Connection could not be simpler.

KEYBOARD OPTION Add a Keyboard by simply plugging into the SXI and turn your CD32 into a real computer

EXTERNAL FLOPPY DRIVE OPTION Add a Zappo Floppy Drive and have access to the thousands of low cost Amiga titles.

PRINTER OPTION Now that you have a real computer why n add a Panasonic Printer and enjoy serious graphics and Word processing.

MEMORY EXPANSION OPTION Increase the memory upto 8Mb by the simple addition of Industry standard 32 bit Simms Modules.

New CD32 Owners

Can now enjoy all of the advantages of real computing by adding a keyboard and other standard peripherals. Add a floppy drive and enjoy access to thousands of low cost Amiga Titles, add a printer and move into graphics and wordprocessing, the expansion possibilities are as flexible as if you owned an Amiga 1200

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New Amiga CD32 Pack	Normal Indi Price	Launch Price
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SAVE £46

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Amiga 4000/030



It's here - The new Amiga 4000/030

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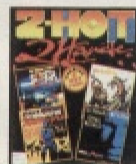
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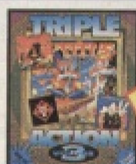
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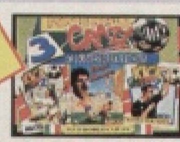




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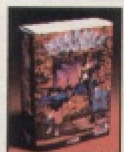
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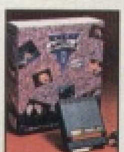
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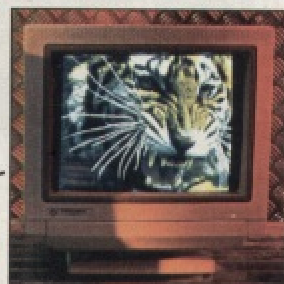
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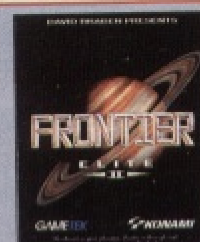
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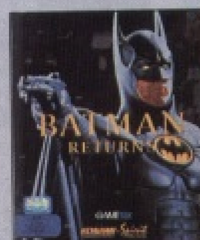
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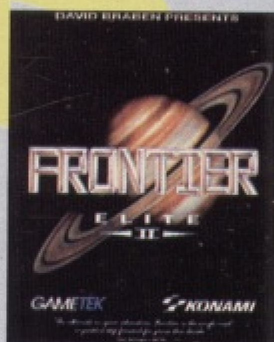
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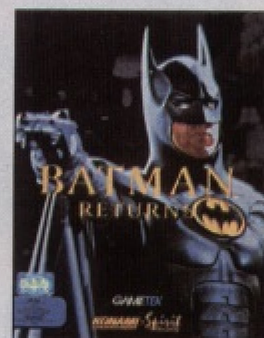


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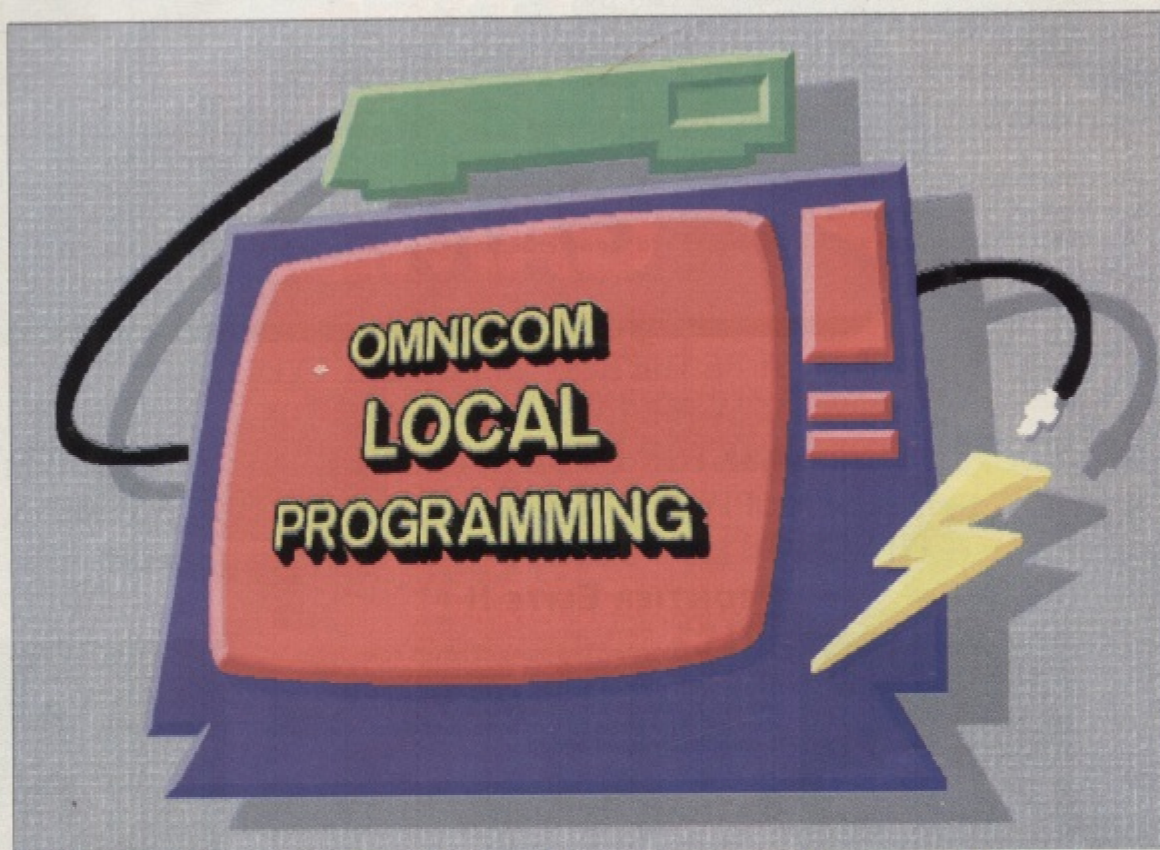
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Above: *Scala* **is being used by literally dozens of Cable TV companies across the world. It's ideal as an information gathering and distribution system.**

Left: Omnicom Cable is a local community cable company which uses *Scala* **InfoChannel to keep its subscribers informed about local affairs and events.**

SCALA

Why Multimedia doesn't have to be boring!

Multimedia is alive and well and appearing on a screen near you now. Mat Broomfield takes a look at the wonderful world of *Scala*, the multimedia package that's transforming the way we communicate.

FRANKFURTERS DO IT BIGGER

The world's biggest example of *Scala* InfoChannel is at the Eintracht Frankfurt football stadium where an enormous screen measuring 150 square meters (about 33 feet high by 50 feet long) displays information and graphics to as many as 60,000 people at a time.

Horst Sparwald, the stadium's technical and video director who has been using *Scala* there since 1990, says of the system: 'We use *Scala* because it's so good. We can produce special effects very quickly.'

The system consists of a specially-produced video wall onto which the *Scala* presentations are projected in real time. Horst controls the operation from his studio on the football ground which contains more than 25 screens as well as various video sources and text generators. These are all mixed together and controlled by the Amiga and *Scala*, and the whole system can be brought on-line at the click of a button.

The massive 150 square metre screen at the Eintracht Frankfurt football stadium is the world's largest example of *Scala* in public use.

As PCs gain an ever greater, yet undeserved slice of the computer pie, it always comes as something of a thrill to hear about the Amiga taking it on head-to-head and whipping it into the ground. The Video Toaster does it for video and TV production, and now *Scala MM* does the same for multimedia presentations.

MULTI-WHAT?

multimedia is one of the buzzwords around at the moment, and a literal translation of its meaning would suggest that it has something to do with the use of more than one form of media, but this is not necessarily the case. On PCs, multimedia has been taken to mean that if you have a CD-ROM drive, you have multimedia. However, *Scala*'s version is much closer to the real thing. Elsewhere in this special you'll be able to read all about *Scala MM300*, the latest home version of their multimedia software. However, it's only in its Infochannel incarnation that *Scala MM* really encapsulates everything that the phrase 'multimedia' has to offer.

Scala Infochannel IC400 can combine information drawn from, or generated by every conceivable source. It can access data stored on floppy and hard disks, even CD-ROMs, but its abilities go far, far beyond that. For starters, it can be used as a MIDI controller, that means that not only can it replay your MIDI instruments, but it will also operate your MIDI lighting and effects units, mixing desks, even cameras; in fact anything to which a MIDI interface is connected. If live music is not your thing, how about spooling music straight from a CD? Infochannel will control a CDTV for example, so that you can play CD audio tracks to accompany your presentations.

As if that wasn't enough, the program supports every form of communications protocol, ranging from Local Area Networks (LANs) to modems and even satellite linking. Using these it can instantly exchange data with host computers anywhere in the world. This in turn means that you are no longer limited to the equipment and storage capacity of your own computer. You can draw upon the resources of more powerful systems no matter where they are.

Part of the reason for *Scala*'s amazing success comes from the huge number of uses to which it can be put. It can be used for titling and sub-titling, presentations and even as an interactive information source. It can be used to drive massive hundred foot arena screens or tiny three inch portable TVs, the user's imagination really is the only limit.

So how does this marvellous system work? Well *Scala* is simply a tool for multimedia choreography. What a conductor is to the creation of great music, *Scala* is to the production of great (or small) multimedia productions. The most surprising thing about the program, is how easy it is to

David Zmich, far right, is the visionary behind Omnicron Cable's *Scala* **network.**





Scala is an absolutely ideal advertising tool, as demonstrated by these ads which appeared in a shopping mall in Sweden.



use. It offers all the flexibility of a custom-designed program, yet the vast majority of presentations can be set up using the mouse and perhaps just the occasional bit of typing.

But enough of the hyperbole, let's take a look at where and how the program is being used...

UNITING THE COMMUNITY BY CABLE IN THE USA

The Omnicom Cable TV company operates out of Canton, Michigan. They're responsible for the production and maintenance of a number of community TV channels, which between them provide a vast amount of information on local issues and interests, as well as supplying educational material for local schools and libraries.

The system revolves around a number of Infochannel-based master-stations that are used to choreograph and store the data to be displayed over the various networks. Each of the town-ships, cities and libraries served by the system has at least one operator whose responsibility it is to input accurate and up-to-the-minute information pertaining to their area of speciality within the community and the district.

These operators work on remote Infochannel terminals to create a variety of different types of information ranging from the creation of single messages, to the production of entire scripts. An Infochannel script is a short program that may contain one or more pages of information ranging from a picture with a caption, to an entire presentation consisting of hundreds of pictures, music, narration and scrolling monologue. »

WHAT ABOUT THE HUMAN TOUCH?

The InfoChannel system is so powerful, that in many cases it can completely replace human beings. However, the 'human element' is still one of the most important parts of many services, and far from putting humans on the scrap heap, the system is freeing them to achieve a greater potential as they're no longer called upon to answer endless banal questions and, as a result, they get more job satisfaction. A good example of this is the Stockholm concert hall. Traditionally, patrons spend a significant amount of time waiting in the foyer areas, where they may become bored. Six monitors showing a variety of relevant information helps to relieve the boredom, and by including information about future schedules and forthcoming events, the owners maximise the time that patrons spend in these waiting areas. This then frees the staff to concern themselves with customer service.



Scala is used at the the Stockholm concert hall to provide an entertaining distraction to stop patrons from becoming restless whilst they wait to watch their shows.

EX MEANS EXTRA!

We've already talked at length about *Scala*'s flexibility, but if everything is simply thrown at them in one huge lump, some users may find that they're overwhelmed by the sheer extent of the program's abilities. Furthermore, many users may never need some of the more up-market options (such as satellite links or Local Area Networking).

This has been taken into consideration and many of the program's more advanced features are only provided in the form of EX modules. These modules are add-on modules which perform specific and limited functions, such as the control of video equipment for instance. When they're added to the system, they provide an extra column on the main control screen (see the review of MM300 on page 38). This column simply lets you perform the additional functions of the selected EX module as part of your script.

Depending upon which version of *Scala* you buy (MM210, MM300, IC400 or IC500), you'll receive some or most of these modules free with the program. The others are available as optional extras. Here's a list of the currently available EX modules:



Scala can control and direct all of this equipment and much much more.

NAME	FUNCTION
Laser Disk Pack	Specific module for controlling laser disk players.
Ion	Controls the Canon still video player.
MIDI	Plays MIDI files.
CDTV	Controls CDTV for CD sound.
Link	Lets other applications control Scala.
Genlock	Controls genlocking attributes.
DVE-10	Controls VideoComp genlock.
SerialText	Imports text from serial port.
Modem	Facilitates modem communications.
NullModem	Facilitates serial port (data link) communications.
Network	Facilitates local area network (LAN) communications.
Log	Generates a log file and statistics.
Timetable	Generates timetable displays for airports etc.
SynchroIN/OUT	Used for synchronising two players.
VCR Pack	Specific modules for controlling video players.
Switcher	Controls a serial switcher.
Graphics controllers	A variety of modules for controlling Amiga display boards such as IV24.
File formats	A variety of modules for alien picture file formats such as PCX, BMP, TIFF, etc.
Toaster	Controls the Video Toaster.
Studio16	Controls the Sunrize 16-bit sound sampler.
Newsflash	For reading quick messages from external machines such as news and weather wire services.

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Renault in Luxembourg are using an interactive touch screen system to help their customers to choose their ideal vehicle.

» All of the scripts are then uploaded via the telephone lines to a distribution centre containing nine InfoChannel player stations. These then route the various scripts to the appropriate receivers which, in turn, will eventually transmit the scripts via the cable network which goes directly into people's homes and schools and libraries in the district.

Omnicon's programming engineer David Zmich says of the system: 'We needed software that could perform all tasks within the setup we already had and InfoChannel is a truly beautiful system. Installing the program means that we're taking a big leap in technology.'

Although the system is extremely easy to use and operate, when the system was initially introduced users from all levels were trained at Omnicom's headquarters. Says David Zmich: 'Even if it's very simple to use, we wanted to give people a good idea of what the system can do since it has so many advanced features.'

The home cable channels are only available by subscription. They offer information about local affairs and governmental programs. They currently have 40,000 subscribers.

GUIDING CAR BUYERS IN BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG

Of course *Scala* doesn't always have to be used on a grand scale, in keeping with their diminutive national boundaries, the Belgians and Luxembourgers have produced a very compact system which is ideal for more personal interactions.

Renault have used the system to create an interactive information point whereby customers can be advised of the vehicle that best suits their exact requirements and tastes. There are currently 22 identical systems in operation, and each one consists of a *Scala* player with access to about 60Mb of data. These are connected to touch sensitive monitors which respond to finger touching as a means of making selections and manipulating the script.

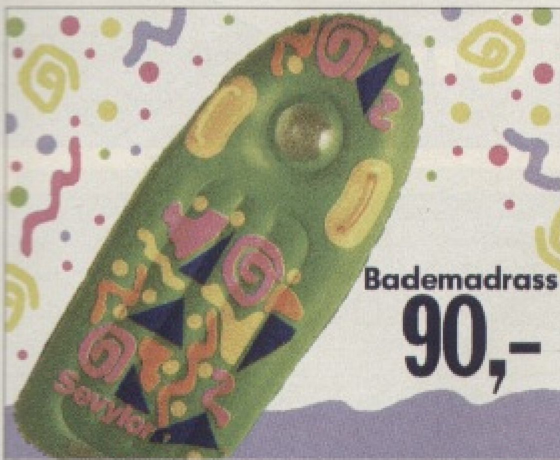
The scripts themselves present the users, who are all potential Renault customers, with clear choices as to the type of car that they want. These start with the basic option to select a vehicle for business and personal use, and become progressively more specific depending upon the choices that are made, eventually leading the user to what is hopefully their ideal Renault vehicle.

Each stage of the selection process is accompanied by symbolic cartoon graphics representing the choices available. These are enclosed in boxes or buttons and it's these that respond to the user's touch. On many occasions, choices are accompanied by appropriate sound effects such as honking horns and tinny radios. These sounds have been stored on each system's hard drive as ordinary IFF samples, and could easily be altered or removed.

Digitised photos of the various vehicles are also included to add yet more visual interest. The system is said to be so easy that a politician could figure out how to use it! It even offers you the choice to work in either French or Dutch. Because

OPENING NEW MARKETS

Because the potential world market for *Scala* is so huge, it would be very easy to expand beyond the resources and management capability of the company. To overcome this, *Scala* use a clever approach which ensures maximum corporate growth, whilst retaining the highest levels of customer service and personal attention. What they've done is to look at the market and identify accepted experts or experienced companies in areas that *Scala* want to move into. They then offer them distribution rights for InfoChannel in specific market areas such as cable networks, hotel information systems, etc. *Scala* also provides training so that the sales force of these third-party companies know exactly what *Scala* is capable of. Finally, they develop specific 'solutions' for the business they're trying to get into. A solution is simply a tech-speak way of saying that they develop software and scripts appropriate to their chosen market. This way of operating means that *Scala* only needs a minimal staff, because it's the sales force from other companies that does the selling and offers the after sales support.







Scala is ideal for captive audiences such as those waiting to pay for petrol, Post Office Customers. Not only can you use it to educate or sell, it also helps to relieve their boredom while they wait to be served

the units are not currently linked into the communications network, any updates have to be done by manually upgrading the script on each terminal. However, because InfoChannel makes it so easy to completely rearrange or even replace a script from a remote site, Renault are currently considering altering the system so that all new models of vehicle will be automatically added to the current database that each terminal holds.



THE DIGITAL HIGHWAY?

CU AMIGA's editor Dan Slingsby has long held a special fascination for a concept that's become known as, 'The digital highway'. This concept revolves around the idea of real-time electronic communications covering all current areas of communication, ranging from low-tech telephone conversation to leading edge video and computer transmissions. It seems that this technology has advanced a significant step thanks to *Scala*, especially since their recent deal with Ameritech, to provide a cable networking solution. It seems that Ameritech are interested in partnering *Scala* to develop the concept of Interactive TV, an idea which has so far failed to get any further than crude viewer research boxes at the moment. However, if touch screen TV can be reduced in cost, it may finally be feasible to develop TV shows where the audience needs only to point at a specific part of the screen to cast a vote or place an order.

This kind of idea would doubtless be of exceptional interest to the providers of home shopping channels who currently employ tens of thousands of staff simply to answer phones and take orders. How much easier it would be if each TV were simply a slave to the master terminal back in the studio. To place an order just press your screen now!

KEEPING PEOPLE INFORMED IN NORWAY

With hundreds of rooms, getting information to the guests at the SAS Scandinavia hotel in Oslo used to be something of a nightmare, and one which occupied the time of most of the staff.

Fortunately, with 500 television sets in the Hotel, it was an ideal candidate for the full InfoChannel treatment. This involved linking the IC400 player to a central network that pipes the images directly to every TV in the hotel. When a guest arrives and checks in, the receptionist automatically activates the TV set in their room so that when the guest arrives, InfoChannel is already displaying information or adverts.

Each TV set is equipped with a remote control which may be used to access the hotel's information bank which provides details about the services offered as well as local facilities which are available.

The hotel, which has been selected as the official hotel for the winter Olympics at Lillehammer, is currently considering installing an additional information channel catering specifically to the event. The system was installed by Thorn EMI, one of *Scala*'s biggest customers, who are single-handedly responsible for the massive growth of *Scala* use in hotels around the world.

PUTTING PEOPLE'S MINDS AT REST IN MAASTRICHT

The Maastricht University hospital uses the interactive approach to ease visitor stress and help the staff. Using a touch-screen terminal, visitors can quickly find out a broad range of information ranging from maps of the hotel, showing the various wards and departments, to guidance on what to do about particular injuries.

As with the system being used by the Benelux Renault dealers, the hospital system uses multiple choice questions to guide the user towards ever more specific areas of the system, until eventually it is able to provide them with exactly the information they require!

This is ideal for use in a busy hospital because much of the office staff's time would otherwise be occupied answering simple questions that the system can handle equally well.

Hotel staff can quickly update the messages on the hotel system so that guests at the SAS Scandinavia hotel receive up-to-the-minute information.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

In 1987 two friends were having a quiet drink in a bar in Norway. One was a cable TV operator, the other was Jon Bohmer, the President of Scala. The cable operator knew of Jon's interest in the Amiga and he asked if Jon had any idea how they could come up with an alternative information system to the rather limited Teletext, which was all that was available at the time. Jon turned his mind to the problem and assembled a group of talented friends to come up with a powerful, yet easy to use, information delivery system. *Scala* was the result, and since that time the program has been constantly expanded to provide more and more features, so that it can be used in ever more diverse ways. In fact, the identification and exploitation of new markets is probably the least optimised part of *Scala*'s current operation, and the one with the greatest potential. The problem is, there are just so many new opportunities.

Menu

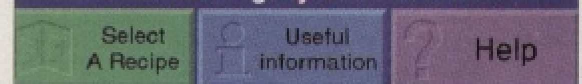
Make your choice from the options below.

Press the GREEN button for a list of recipes individually selected for you.

Press the BLUE button for general cooking information.

Press the PURPLE button for help on using this system, and more information about your choices.

Just touch lightly on the screen.



Co-op in Leicester use touch screen *Scala* presentations to suggest recipes and their ingredients to customers.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO SCALA

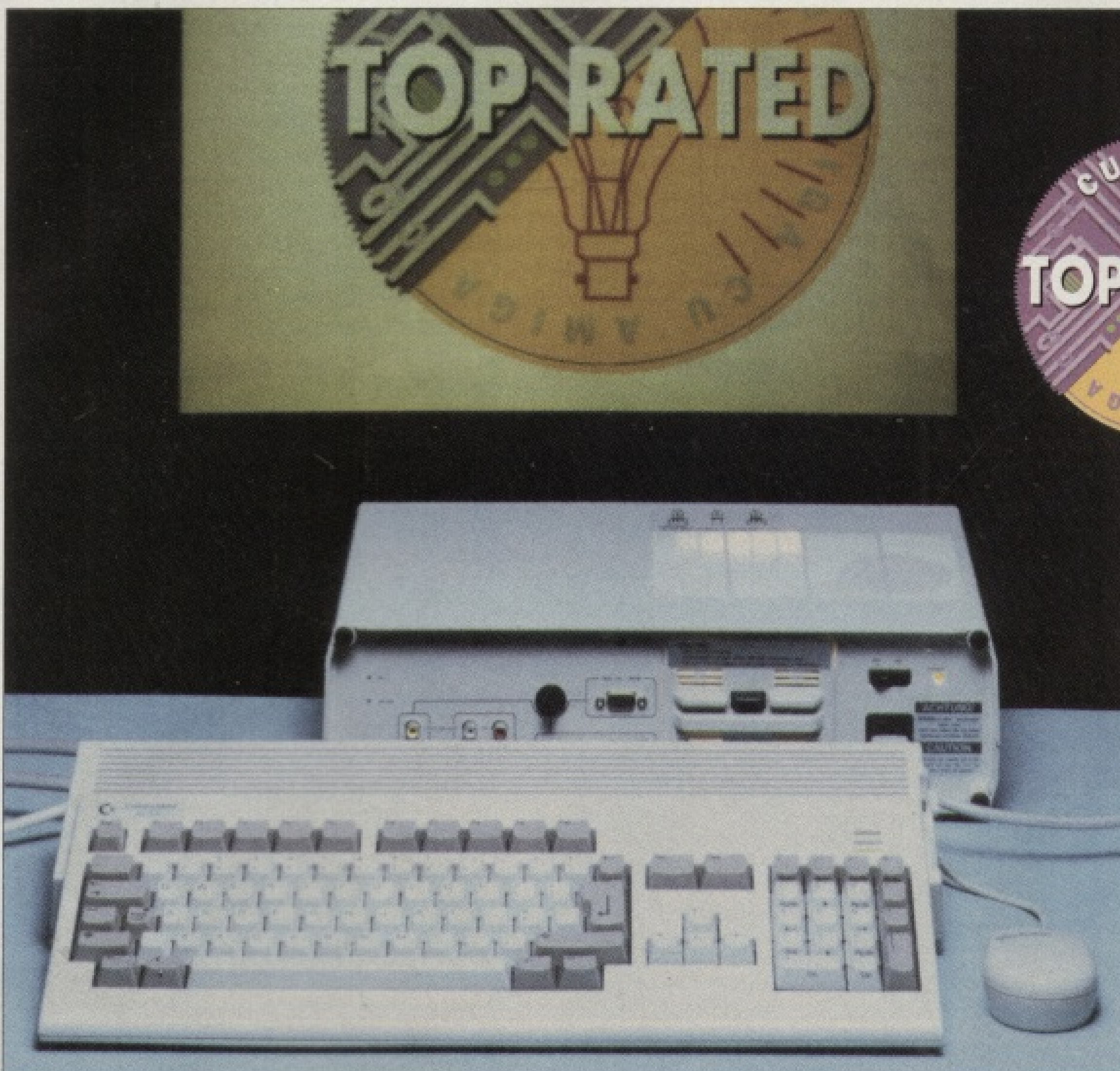
Scala is now being used commercially in more than 40 countries around the world. Its primary usage can be divided into a small number of categories. Above all, it's an information delivery system, but it's the delivery method and intended recipients of that information that makes all the difference.

To generalise, information is intended for public or corporate/business use. Under the public heading, you can include things like the video wall at Frankfurt football stadium, the cable network in Michigan and even while-u-wait displays in police stations, MacDonalds and theatres across the world.

Under the corporate heading, you can include staff training programs and specialised information services. Here's a shortened list of just some of the companies who are using Scala throughout the world.

Australia	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
	Department of Social Security
	North Adeleide school of art education
Austria	The institute for Biochemistry
Belgium	Brussels Hilton Hotel
Denmark	SAS hotel chain
Finland	Finnish railways
	Helsinki tax office
France	Strassbourg Hilton
Germany	Munich Sherraton Hotel
	Frankfurt Opera company
Great Britain	Mayfair hotel
	MacDonalds restaurants
	Encyclopaedia Britannica
	Co-op supermarkets
Israel	The Ministry of Defence
Norway	University of Bergen
Spain	Socialist Labour Party
Sweden	Swedish Houses of Parliament
USA	IBM mainframe factory!
	US Postal service
	Las Vegas Hilton hotel
	Sunbelt Cable advertising
	Manhattan cable
	Department of Telecommunications and Energy
	General motors HQ.

EPSON VP-100PS PROJECTOR



Pin-sharp images are possible with the VP-100PS projector at up to seven feet across.

Scala is the ideal multi-media software tool for presentations. Tony Horgan checks out the latest projector TV for your multi-media images – the Epson VP – 100PS.

CU AMIGA TOP RATED

Just imagine that you could stretch your TV or monitor so that it was about seven feet across and five feet tall. Pretty mad, don't you reckon? Now think what you could do with such a massive display. How does a life-sized version of *Indy 500* grab you? Or maybe you'd like to see how your *Deluxe Paint* Jackson Pollocks would look hung on the wall. Heaven forbid, you could even use it for a sensible application like business presentations or multimedia projects. Get your hands on one of these VP-100PS projectors, and all of that could become reality.

THE SPECS

Okay then, first the facts and specs. The VP100-PS accepts three types of video input: RGB with Sync, composite video and EGA-type signals. This should ensure compatibility with most video sources. A lead is included to connect it to your Amiga's video port. There are also stereo sound inputs (standard phono sockets) and a built in speaker. The font panel has slider controls for the brightness, contrast, colour and volume levels, and the picture is focused with a standard rotary lens.

The incoming video signal is digitised onto an LCD screen with a resolution that seems to be somewhere between the Amiga's low and medium res modes. The image on the LCD screen is then projected onto a screen or wall, up to about seven feet wide before the quality begins to drop. Basically, you plug it into your Amiga, and it works, simple as that.

PERFORMANCE

Unlike some realtime video grabbers (such as the Apple Mac system Theatrix, used to grab all the screenshots in this magazine), which can have trouble keeping a steady picture when there's a lot of fast animation going on, the Video Projector manages to keep up with 50Hz frame rates. Smooth scrolling remains smooth, without being degraded by horizontal splits, and there's little sign of after-blur from the liquid crystals.

Probably the only degradation you'll notice is with small text displayed in medium resolution or anything higher. In this case, you get an approximation of the screen (as the resolution of the LCD screen is lower than that of the original source), which can make certain letters look a little blurred and wobble around a bit. We're talking Workbench text here though, so don't worry about using proper video fonts in higher resolutions. Due to synchronisation technicalities, it won't work with some of the new super-duper AGA screen modes, but all the standard modes are supported.

CONCLUSION

Having been messing around with DIY freaky videos and animations for a while now, I've been gagging for a bit of kit like this, and I wasn't disappointed. The trouble is, at £799, it's out of my reach. A big corporate budget would absorb that price without too much bother, but it's a shame that a lot of interested parties are going to miss out. Pricing aside, it's hard to fault the Video Projector. The picture quality is excellent, good enough for just about any application, although a higher resolution LCD screen would be nice.

90%

Available from: Visual Products, PO Box 48, Gt Missenden, Bucks, HP16 9HL. Tel: 0494 890601. Price: £799.



Volume, brighness, contrast and colour controls are available from the front panel.

We tested the Video Projector with a variety of software. Here are the results.

SCALA

Multimedia presentation is the most obvious use for the projector and it handles this kind of thing with no trouble at all. The audio input means that you can run your soundtracks through it too, and those graphs, charts, maps and animations look wonderful in amazing big-o-vision.

DELUXE PAINT

Now this is wild! Painting on your wall in full technicolour is immensly satisfying, although to be honest, not too practical. Eye strain sets in surprisingly quickly, probably due to the many icons and menus that are used. On the other hand, it's spot-on for displaying your images once you've created them.

DEMOS AND ANIMATIONS

Lorks-a-lordy! If you're a technohead or a fan of light shows, plasma, 3D tunnel effects and so on, then this will just blow you away! Watching a good demo on this after seeing it on a TV is comparable to the first time you heard music through stereo headphones. Excellent for parties, clubs and raves.

GAMES

Anyone for *Virtual Indy 500*? If you position yourself right, you can sit right up by the screen without blocking the beam. Your field of vision is now completely overtaken by tarmac, tyres, and the congested home straight. Unlike *Deluxe Paint*, this seemed to be quite comfortable on the eyes for reasonable amounts of time (say 15 minutes or so). Other games however, such as sprite-based platform games and shoot 'em ups, can be a bit too hard to follow on such a big display, and gain little, if anything



SOFTWARE

We are recognised in the Amiga community as one of the leading specialists in Hard Drives and Mass Data Storage.

AMIGA A4000/040

The flagship of the Commodore Amiga range. Based around the 68040 processor. Comes with a Hard Drive, 2+4 RAM and WB 3.0.

85 Mb version – £1899	340Mb version – £2069
130Mb version – £1919	426Mb version – £2149
200Mb version – £1939	540Mb version – £2299
250Mb version – £1979	

AMIGA A4000/030

The same specifications as it's big brother but designed around the 68030 processor. The A4000/030 comes with a Hard Drive, 1+1 RAM and WB 3.0.

(FOR 2+2 PLEASE ADD £69)

85 Mb version – £899	340Mb version – £1099
130Mb version – £969	426Mb version – £1199
200Mb version – £999	540Mb version – £1299
250Mb version – £1039	

AMIGA A1200

The A1200 sports many of the features of the A4000 series. Based around the 68020 processor with 2Mb of RAM and WB 3.0 as standard. A full range of Hard Drives are also available for the A1200.

Basic A1200 - £289	120Mb H.D version - £494
40Mb H.D version - £388	170Mb H.D version - £528
60Mb H.D version - £445	200Mb H.D version - £548
85Mb H.D version - £468	256Mb H.D version - £578



DESKTOP DYNAMITE PACK

The desktop Dynamite Pack contains 5 pieces of software written specifically for the AGA chipset, which includes DpaintAGA, WordworthAGA, Oscar and other with a total street value of over £300. (PLEASE ADD £40 FOR DTD PACK)

GRAPHICS AND VIDEO

REAL3D 2	£378.50
ART DEPT PRO	£134.99
MORPH PLUS	£136.99
DPAINT 4 AGA	£ 66.00
DPAINT 4	£ 59.99
SCENERY ANIMATOR 4	£ 54.99
VISTA PRO 3	£ 44.99
MAKE PATH	£ 23.99
TERRAFORM	£ 23.99
SCALA MM210	£ P.O.A
SCALA MM300	£ P.O.A

UTILITIES

X-COPY PRO	£ 31.99
GB ROUTE PLUS	£ 32.99
LATTICE C V6.1	£259.99
DIRECTORY OPUS	£ 46.50
VIDEO BACKUP SYSTEM	£ 49.95
QUARTERBACK TOOLS	£ 47.50
DEV PACK 3	£ 53.99
VIDI AMIGA 12	£ 81.95
DISTANT SUNS V4.2	£ 39.99

MUSIC

STEREO MASTER	£ 29.99
BARS & PIPES PRO	£215.99
TECHNOSOUND TURBO	£ 58.50

WORD PROCESSOR & DTP

WORDWORTH 2	£78.99
FINAL COPY 2	£74.99
PENPAL	£28.95
PAGESETTER 3	£43.99
PRO DRAW V3.0	£64.99
PRO PAGE V4.0	£89.99

GAMES

CIVILISATION AGA	£ 39.00
CIVILISATION AGA UPGRADE (SEND YOUR DISKS AND DETAILS)	£ 19.00

PRINTERS

CITIZEN	
CITIZEN 240	£212.00
CITIZEN 240C	£234.00
PANASONIC	
KXP 2123 COLOUR	£210.00
KXP 2023	£178.00
HEWLETT PACKARD	
HP 500C	£290.00
HP 510	£246.00
HP 550C	£490.00



DEMON



OVERDRIVE 35

These external hard drives come in an ABS box styled to match the Amiga A1200. They plug in via the PCMCIA slot and include an external PSU so as not invalidate your Commodore warranty. Ultra fast transfer rates of up to 2Mb/sec. Full 1 year warranty, all the software needed to mount and configure the drive is included.

130Mb version –£299	340Mb version– £449
200Mb version – £349	426Mb version– £549
250Mb version – £399	540Mb version– £699

A1200 UPGRADES

GVP SCSI/RAM BOARD

This board is user fittable via the trapdoor expansion slot of the A1200. It has slots for up to 8Mb of 32bit RAM, a maths co-pro and includes a SCSI interface as standard.

0Mb / NO FPU	£179.00
4Mb RAM/33MHz FPU	£349.00
SCSI CABLE KIT	£ 59.00

GVP A1230 BOARD

Another quality trapdoor expansion for the A1200. It features a 68030 processor as standard and has slots for a maths co-pro and up to 8Mb of 32bit RAM.

0Mb / NO FPU	£269.00
4Mb RAM/40MHz FPU	£439.00

GVP ACCESSORIES

33MHz 68882 FPU	£ 99.00
40MHz 68882 FPU	£129.00
1Mb 32bit RAM	£ 64.00
4Mb 32bit RAM	£153.00

DKB RAM BOARD

This budget expansion board fits via the trapdoor. It has 2x32bit SIMM sockets for up to 8Mb of memory, a 16MHz 68881 FPU, and a battery backed clock fitted as standard.

DKB with 0Mb RAM/68881	£ 99.00
DKB with 1Mb RAM/68881	£129.00
DKB with 4Mb RAM/68881	£229.00

IDE INTERNAL HARD DRIVE KITS

These kits come complete with screws, instructions and all the software necessary to prep and configure the drive.

40Mb–£139 60Mb–£119 80Mb–£179
120Mb–£279 209Mb–£399

A4000 UPGRADES

PHOTON (FOR A4000/030)

This board wil transform an Amiga A4000/030 into a fully fledged 040. It features a 040 CPU module with a MMU and a built-in FPU running at 25MHz.

PHOTON UPGRADE £699

HELLFIRE (FOR A4000/030)

This is a replacement CPU board for the A4000/030. It features a 50 MHz clock speed, a built in MMU and a 50 MHz 68882 FPU. Your 030 will only be 10% slower than an 040 during most operations.

HELLFIRE UPGRADE £299

DKB 128

The DKB 128 is a 0 wait state memory expansion board for the A4000 series. It has slots for up to 128Mb of 32bit RAM using SIMMS of any size. It is a true ZORRO 3 card which makes for a very fast board.

DKB BOARD (BLANK) £269 (See chips for memory)

HARD DRIVES (A1200 & A4000)

These Hard Drives can be fitted at any time by us (FOR THE A1200) or the end-user. All the necessary software is included.

85Mb – £129.00	330Mb – £299.00
130Mb – £149.00	426Mb – £369.00
200Mb – £199.00	540Mb – £399.00
250Mb – £249.00	
FITTING FEE FOR A1200	£ 29.00

CHIPS

1Mb SIMM	£ 39.00
4Mb SIMM	£134.00
25MHz 68882 FPU	£ 89.00
33MHz 68882 FPU + CRYSTAL	£ 99.00
40MHz 68882 FPU + CRYSTAL	£129.00

CD32 CONSOLE

This machine represents the future in home entertainment and video game play. A self-contained CD console which you can expand into a full CD based home computer. CD32 comes complete with two stunning AGA games.

ALL FOR JUST £279

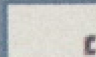
We offer a full fitting, installation and advice service to anybody interested in upgrading or adding a Hard Drive to ANY system.

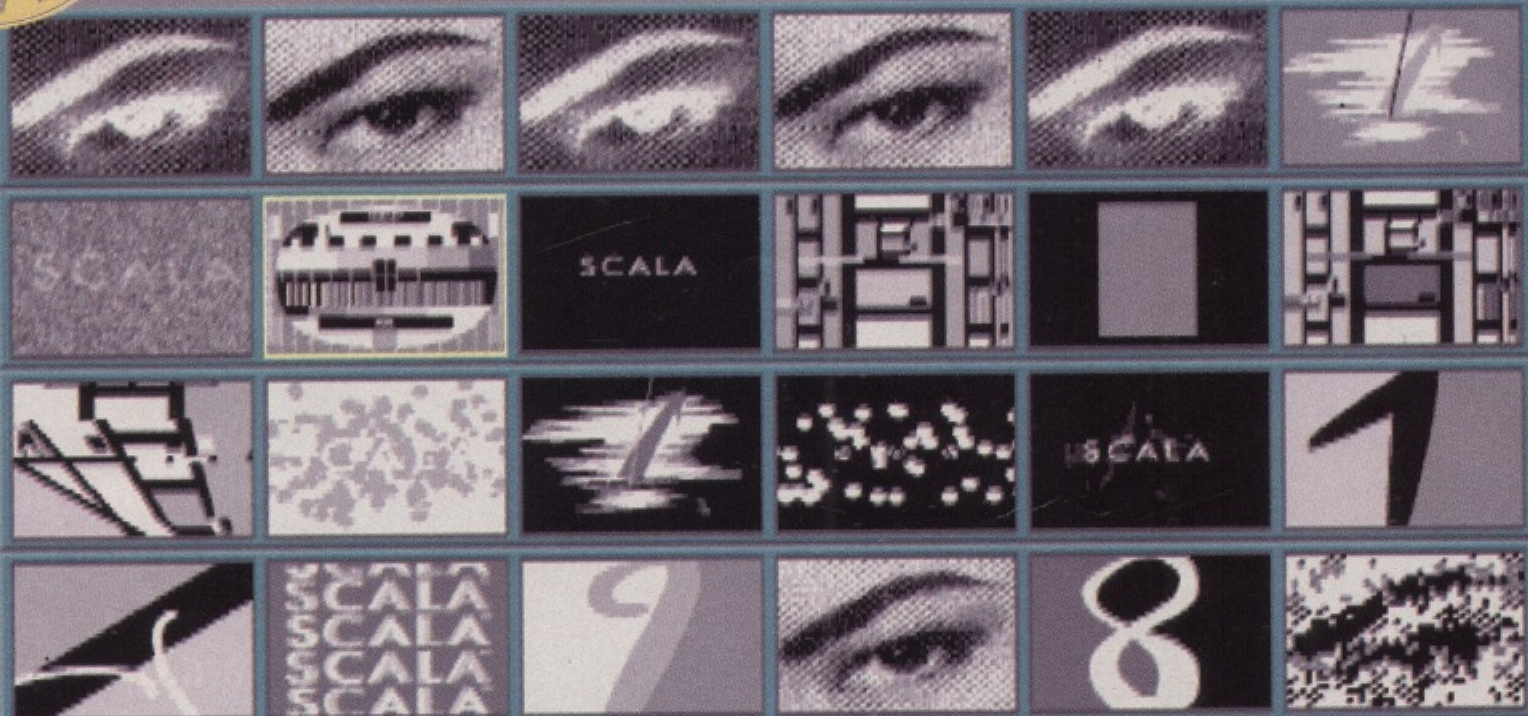
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**SOFTWARE DEMON Ltd.
(0736) 331039**

Scala MM300









Jason Holborn investigates the latest upgrade of what could be the most powerful multimedia authoring system available on the Amiga.

Most computers have one or two 'killer' applications that set them apart from the competition – Apple Macintosh has the brilliant *Quark XPress* desktop publishing program, the PC compatibles have 'serious' programs like *dBASE* and *Lotus 1-2-3* and even the Amiga's closest cousin, the Atari ST, has captured its own niche market with Steinberg's *Cubase* sequencer. The Amiga also has its own killer applications – just wave copies of either *DPaint IV AGA, Brilliance* or *Art Department Professional* under the noses of other computer users and their skin will develop a decidedly green hue in no time at all! Most of these packages are available for other platforms, but the originals are always the best – you can buy *DPaint* for the PC and the ST, for example, but the Amiga original still reigns supreme!

A less obvious killer Amiga application that has been causing quite a storm in the multimedia and video presentation markets is *Scala* (which, incidentally, is Norwegian for ladder) from the Norwegian company of the same name. Originally designed as a video titling program, *Scala* has transformed into a high-powered multimedia authoring system capable of controlling video disk players, playing animations and music and just about anything else that a multimedia producer could possibly want to do. *Scala* certainly has gained more than its fair share of followers, some of which would probably want to keep the fact a secret – rumour has it that even the mighty IBM (Big Blue to its friends) has installed a number of Amiga-based *Scala* systems in several of its offices across America. Funny thing is, these *Scala* systems have been installed to display a presentation that demonstrates the power of IBM's new multimedia version of its OS/2 PC operating system!

Commodore, too, are big fans of *Scala*. When Commodore invited the UK's top Amiga journalists to the launch of the Amiga 4000/030 last year, *Scala* spearheaded the machine's launch with a very impressive presentation that vividly demonstrated the machine's power. *Scala* was to be seen displaying live video clips from a laser disk player genlocked onto Amiga graphics with music accompaniment from a CDTV player, all of which was controlled directly by an A4000/030 running *Scala*. Even the most jaded of Amiga hacks had to admit that it was an impressive demonstration of the program's power!



The *Scala MM300* 'Edit' menu is a powerful titling program that allows you to produce 'pages' complete with titles, brushes and buttons.



Scala displays your presentations as a list with each 'page' displayed as a separate entry. Each and every page has its own set of attributes which define how the page will be displayed and for how long.



Even the Scala file requester is a cut above the rest – to take the guess work out of selecting picture files, each is displayed in miniature.

MULTIMEDIA MARVEL

Not wanting to rest on its laurels, Scala UK Ltd has launched a new version of its successful multimedia authoring system that promises even greater levels of desktop video titling and multimedia authoring power. *Scala MM300* (The 'MM' bit stands for 'multimedia') allows you to create the same all-singing, all dancing presentations that have become the hallmark of the multimedia revolution. With *Scala* you can create either fully automatic or interactive presentations that draw upon static graphics, animations, music, text and sampled sound effects generated by the Amiga. What's more, if you're feeling very adventurous your *Scala* presentations can also make use of external video and audio devices such as video disk players, CD audio players, MIDI synthesisers and genlocks etc. Add to this *Scala*'s *ARexx* support and there are very few devices that *Scala* can't control!

Seasoned Amiga users will know that *Scala MM300* certainly isn't the first *Scala* product to be released for the Amiga. Indeed, you'll find *Scala HVT* (Home Video Titler), on this month's CU AMIGA coverdisk! Whilst *Scala HVT* will work on any Amiga equipped with nothing more than a megabyte of RAM, *Scala MM300* is definitely aimed at professionals only.

Even if you can afford the rather high asking price, you're going to need a fairly porky Amiga to handle *Scala MM300* – unless you're lucky enough to own an Amiga equipped with at least 3 Mb of RAM, a fairly sizeable hard drive and Workbench 2.04, *Scala MM300* won't run – even then, you really do need an accelerated Amiga (an A1200 at least) to run *Scala MM300* at its full potential! *Scala MM300* is a pretty big application – with all the demonstration files and other associated sundries, the entire *Scala* system takes up a massive 12 Mb of disk space – and that figure doesn't even include the *Scala* fonts! You can strip *Scala* down if you wish, but it's hard trying to decide what to loose – virtually all of *Scala*'s support files are useful!

LOVELY WIDGET!

Lurking at the bottom of the *Scala* box is a rather unobtrusive green 'dongle' that must be plugged into one of your joystick ports for *Scala MM300* to run. I have to admit that I don't usually like dongles – there's nothing worse than having to frantically search around under piles of disks and manuals trying to find a dongle when you have a deadline to meet – but *Scala MM300*'s dongle is certainly a cut above the rest. Whereas most dongles tie up the port that they are connected to, *Scala*'s dongle features a passthru connector which essentially means that you can plug it into your Amiga and forget about it, leaving you to connect and unconnect other hardware without having to worry about where you last left the dongle. I guess it's an unfortunate sign of the times that software publishers have to protect serious applications but at least *Scala* have tried to reduce the inconvenience that such devices introduce.

Booting up *Scala MM300*, the first thing that you'll notice is that the familiar *Scala* front end »

WIPE OUT!

A whole range of video transistors (or 'text wipes' as the manual calls them) can be applied to both the titles and symbols that you can place onto a *Scala MM300* page. This is definitely one of the most impressive aspects of the program as it allows you to create fully animated titles using any combination of the wipes available. *Scala MM300* offers over eighty different wipes ranging from simple left to right (or vice-versa) text crawl and directional gliding to more exotic wipes such as the imaginatively named 'Curtain', 'Escalator' and 'Funkis' wipes. Although most of these wipes work perfectly well on an unaccelerated machine, some do require a fairly porky Amiga in order for them to be displayed smoothly – even my A1200 had problems with some of the more sophisticated wipes!

Assigning a wipe to an 'object' (be it a title or a symbol) is very simple indeed. All you have to do is to select the object with the left mouse button and then click on either the 'In' or 'Out' gadgets, both of which will bring up the same 'Wipes' requester which contains a block of tiny icons, each of which represents an individual wipe pattern. *Scala MM300* gives you a certain amount of control over how a wipe is performed although this is generally restricted to its duration only. Just like the text styles that you define for your titles, any wipes that you define apply to just a single line of text or symbol only, although you can now 'link' objects together so several transitions are performed simultaneously.

The order in which your transitions are displayed may not always be to your liking and so *Scala MM300* provides a very useful 'List' editor which is not unlike the list editor displayed on the *Scala* main menu. Each wipe is listed in the order it will run and you can easily change the order of your wipes by dragging any of the listed entries to new positions within the list.

Once you've defined a page you're returned to the *Scala* main menu which is then used to further fine tune the appearance of your presentation. Just like the Edit menu, the main menu offers a range of wipes and transitions although the wipes that you apply from the main menu work on a page as a whole rather than just a single object within a page. *Scala MM300* offers yet another wide selection of the 'page' wipes (over 100 of them!) which are performed without any visible signs of screen jitters. The range of wipes is certainly impressive and include all the usual fades, dissolves (using a number of different patterns) and transitions you'd expect to find in a decent video titling program. This is perhaps one area where *Scala MM300* really excels – virtually all of the wipes are of professional quality and certainly wouldn't look out of place next to even Video Toaster-generated wipes!



The range of wipes and transitions available is absolutely awesome. Any title or brush can have a wipe attached to it with *Scala MM300*.

has generally remained intact. Although *Scala* does not really follow Commodore's user interface guidelines, I'm sure most *Scala* users would agree that *Scala MM300*'s front end is possibly better than Commodore's own. When you first load up *Scala*, you're presented with a rather attractive screen containing what looks like a massive full-screen form containing ten rows of five gadgets stacked neatly from top to bottom. This is actually the *Scala* main menu and from here you can load in and edit an existing *Scala* presentation or even build your own from scratch. Each row of gadgets displays information on a single 'page' within your presentation with each page listed in the order it will be displayed.

Technically speaking, the term 'page' is rather misleading as it can refer to anything from a simple page of *Scala*-generated titles or a static IFF image, to an animation, a sound track or an 'EX' event (more on these later). Video users should feel right at home with this approach as it is very similar to the 'Edit Decision' lists used in the video industry.

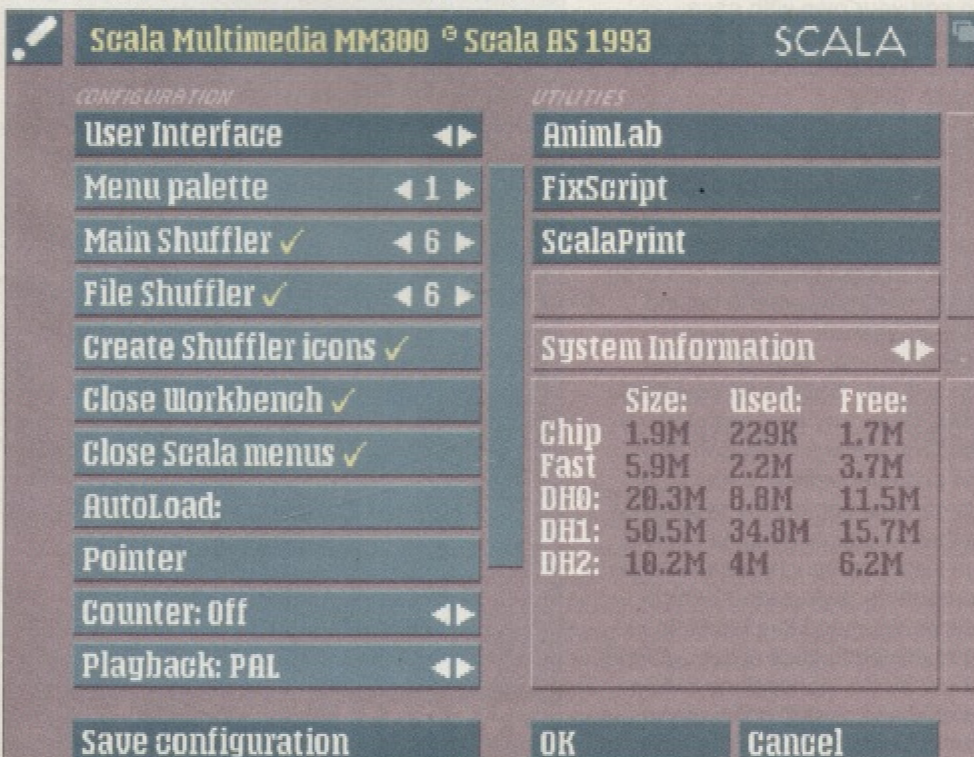
If *Scala MM300*'s list display isn't quite your cup of tea, then you can also display the flow of your presentation using *Scala*'s new 'Shuffler' feature. Introduced with the launch of *Scala MM200* (the previous release of *Scala*), the Shuffler displays miniature or 'thumbnail' representations of each page. Obviously you won't see anything when a page contains a sound track or 'EX' event, but both static images and the first frame from your animations are displayed in miniature. The Shuffler is very similar to the 'storyboards' used in the film and television industry and it certainly provides a much more intuitive way to view and manipulate your presentation. Generating each thumbnail image does take time, but *Scala MM300* is intelligent enough to store the thumbnails as part of the presentation file which makes the task of displaying them considerably faster.

The *Scala* main menu gives you a considerable amount of control over the order of your presentation. In both list and shuffler mode, individual pages can be picked up and then repositioned within your presentation simply by clicking on the page to be moved and then dragging the page to its new position whilst holding down the left mouse button. *Scala MM300 also* gives you an impressive level of control over the timing of your presentation and how each individual page is displayed.

Each page has associated with it a number of additional parameters which define the type of 'wipe' pattern used, the duration of each page (the timing of a presentation can be defined either as an absolute time code or as a relative timing), whether a sample is played and so on. »

Scala's sound support even includes a complete sound sampler that will allow you to record (when a sampler is connected to the Amiga's parallel port) and edit samples without ever having to load a dedicated sampler!





The *Scala* user interface is a joy to behold, but if it's not quite to your taste then you can change virtually every aspect to suit your own particular needs.

MULTIMEDIA EX-TRA!

One of the most powerful aspects of *Scala MM300* is its impressive range of 'EX' modules. These special modules provide an invaluable method of extending *Scala MM300* so that it can draw upon the power of a whole range of video and audio devices. If you're producing a true multimedia production then these modules are very important as they allow *Scala* to directly control the operations of anything from a laser disk player to a CDTV.

Scala MM300 comes complete with a selection of EX modules that provide the program with direct control over a wide range of different hardware devices including Sony, Pioneer and Philips laserdisk players, the Canon 'ION' still video camera, a range of different genlocks including both GVP's G-Lock and G2's VideoCentre systems, GVP's Impact Vision 24 display card and MIDI devices. One of the most interesting modules is the CDTV EX controller which allows you to use the CDTV (and presumably a CD32) as a slave CD audio player. Although the CD32's FMV (full motion video) add-on is not supported, it would seem logical that it's only a matter of time before *Scala* get around to release an EX for this vitally important multimedia product. Other EX's are planned such as an EX for the Video Toaster, the OpalVision graphics card and, best of all, LANC and infrared video decks. With the latter two modules installed, there's no reason whatsoever why you couldn't even use *Scala MM300* as a video editor!

Scala MM300 treats EX modules in exactly the same way as it treats pages and so EX 'events' can be easily embedded into your presentation allowing you to produce presentations that call upon external audio and video footage without having to ask the user to 'select track 10 and then press play' everytime your presentation wants to access some external video footage or an audio track. Each EX has its own unique control panel that pops up onto the screen whenever an EX is assigned to a page. By simply setting the various controls so that the audio or video clip that you want is accessed, *Scala MM300* will do the rest automatically whenever the presentation is run.

There is one major disadvantage with these EX modules. Because each EX requires a cable to be connected between the Amiga's serial port and the device that is to be controlled, only a single EX can be used unless you fit your Amiga with a 'multi-serial' card. This is fine for owners of 'big box' Amigas (the A2000, A4000 etc), but such cards aren't available for the rest of the Amiga range.



For true multi-media power, *Scala*'s 'EX' modules allow you to directly control a wide range of external audio and video devices. Even the now defunct CDTV can be used in your multimedia presentations!

CU Amiga bids for its own TV franchise with nothing more than an Amiga and a copy of *Scala MM300*.

» PAGE PLAY

In order to create a new page, you simply click on the 'New' gadget from the *Scala MM300* main menu and then you're transported to the 'Choose a background page' requester that, as its name suggests, allows you to define the format of your new page. As I said earlier, a page doesn't necessarily have to be a static IFF image or a page of titles – *Scala MM300* gives you a choice of nine different types of event ranging from a background (and IFF image), an animation, a music score (*Scala MM300* supports Sound Tracker modules, SMUS files and modules produced using GVP's DSS-8+ sample sequencer), sound samples and a whole lot more besides. Your page can contain one of any of these types of event.

One nice new feature of *Scala MM300* is the file requester 'shuffler' which, as its name suggests, is very similar to the Shuffler used by the main menu. If you're loading either a background image or an animation, the Shuffler scans the current directory and displays thumbnail representations of any background images or animations that it finds. The *Scala* package comes complete with a wide selection of different backgrounds that have been professionally scanned for the best possible results. These backgrounds (all of which are in high resolution, 16 colour mode) range from slate, brick, water and fabric to more exotic 'high tech' patterns. Although they are not in overscanned format by default, *Scala* does allow you to automatically convert them to overscan when the program is first installed on your hard drive.

If you choose a 'Background' event, *Scala MM300* takes you to the 'Edit' menu that is the heart of *Scala*'s page editing system. If you've ever used a video titling program then you'll find instantly at home with this aspect of the program. The Edit menu contains all the functions you need to create pages consisting of text, brushes and structured graphics. At its simplest level, the Edit menu can be used to type text directly onto a page using any one of the bitmapped fonts available on your system. *Scala MM300* comes complete with a selection of its own fonts which range in size from 9 point to 96 point. Because *Scala* uses standard Amiga bitmapped fonts, however, you can add your own with ease. What's more, outline fonts can be used too simply by installing them as *Workbench* fonts using the Workbench 'Fountain' utility.

Scala's Edit menu gives you complete control over the appearance of the video effects that can be applied to your titles.

STYLE CONSCIOUS

Once you've entered your text onto the page, you can then adjust its justification setting, colour and apply a number of handy video effects such as shadows, outlines, 3D extrusion and you can even drop a partially transparent background behind your text for video caption work. If you're not entirely happy with the position of your text, you can even pick it up with the mouse and drag it to a new position. What's more, any titles that you create are 'non-destructive' – that is, they can be moved, recoloured and even edited at any time. Each line of text is handled completely separately and so any styles that you apply must be applied to each new line in turn. You can, however, define what essentially amount to 'style sheets' which contain all the settings you need in a template.

You're not just restricted to titles either – *DPaint* brushes (or 'Symbols' as the Norwegians call them) can be imported and pasted down anywhere on your page. New to *Scala MM300* is the ability to scale brushes simply by dragging in or out one of eight brush 'handles' that *Scala* places around the symbol. Complete pictures can be loaded as brush files and scaled to suit your needs and if you're lucky enough to own an AGA-based Amiga, you can even display several pictures (in a miniaturised form) on the same page with *Scala* automatically remapping the page's palette so that they are displayed in their correct coloursettings. Just like brushes, these 'pseudo' brushes can be scaled too with very little loss in quality thanks to *Scala MM300*'s powerful Floyd-Steinberg dithering capability.

CONCLUSION

It's unusual even in these times of professionally designed Amiga software products to find a program that not only rivals anything that the competition on other computer platforms have to offer, but literally blows them out of the water. Indeed – being the cynic I am – I tried desperately throughout my entire time with *Scala MM300* to find fault with the product but *Scala* is possibly the closest to a 'perfect' application that Amiga users (or indeed other computer users) will ever get. Every single aspect of the *Scala* system is polished to the point that you have to wear very dark sunglasses just to avoid the glare!

Scala MM300 isn't cheap and so it is unlikely to find its way onto the hard disks of most users. For any video or multimedia professional that needs to produce anything from a corporate presentation or broadcast quality video production to a full blown interactive multimedia information system, *Scala MM300* is a dream come true. If handled correctly, Amiga users aren't the only ones that could benefit from Scala's talents – if Commodore were to produce an Amiga 4000 with a built-in CD-ROM drive capable of handling FMV video with a copy of *Scala MM300*, they would have a serious platform to take on (and beat!) the established multimedia market leaders. If there's one application that will sell Amigas in the multimedia market, this has to be it! CU

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EASE OF USE 92%
Scala MM300 is so easy to use that it almost insults your intelligence!

VALUE FOR MONEY 68%
Very expensive by Amiga standards, but Scala MM300 is still good value for money if you compare it to similar programs on the Mac and PC.

DOCUMENTATION 88%
A very well produced manual that is nicely laid out, easy to read and informative – what more could you ask for?

FLEXIBILITY 92%
Scala's impressive range of 'EX' modules ensure that there are very few devices Scala can't control.

> *Forget DPaint. Forget ADPro and even Brilliance – Scala MM300 is the Amiga's most powerful application.*

OVERALL 94%

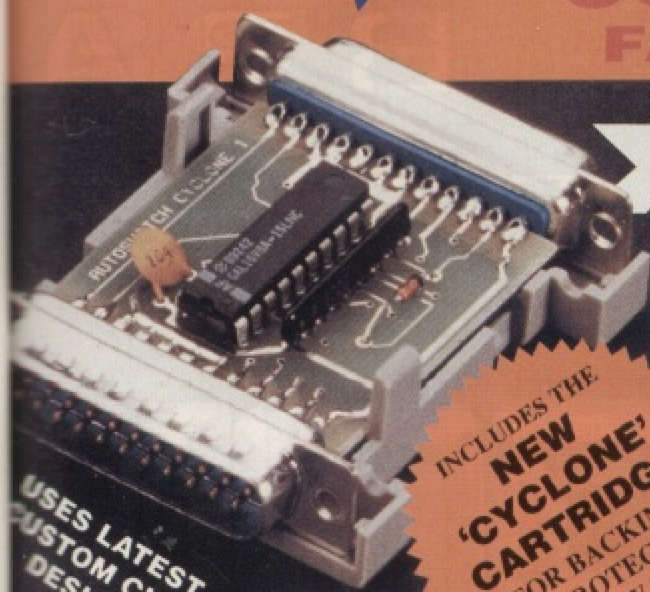
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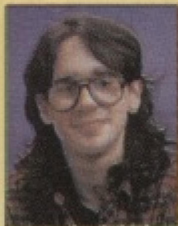
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CD32 ZONE

The only place for news and reviews on the CD32

NO CD DRIVE FOR THE A1200!



Hands up all of you who didn't buy a CD32 this Christmas, but instead purchased an A1200 with the aim of upgrading as soon as the CD-ROM drive was released this year. Well, I'm sorry to have to be the one to break this to you, but that particular piece of hardware seems extremely doubtful at the moment. Rumours have been circulating for the past couple of weeks about the unit having being dropped by Commodore, so we decided to look into the facts.

Unfortunately, Commodore were unavailable for comment at time of writing, but a spokesperson for them admitted that the unit had been moved to the bottom of their (Commodore's) agenda, and that its release was, "Not in the foreseeable future." The reasons behind the decision are sketchy, technical problems being rumoured top of the list.

You don't need me to tell you how many people this is going to disappoint. It may be fair to say that sales of CD32 have been hampered by the proposed drive, people choosing to take the safer upgrade route, but dropping the drive will kill sales completely. Without the support of the thousands of A1200 owners willing to upgrade, we could see the CD32 going the same way as the CDTV, which would be nothing more than a tragic waste of an excellent machine.

Get your collective pens to paper, and let Commodore know exactly how you feel. By showing them you're willing to help the machine win, we can see the CD revolution really break into the home.

Tony Dillon, Games Editor

NEWS

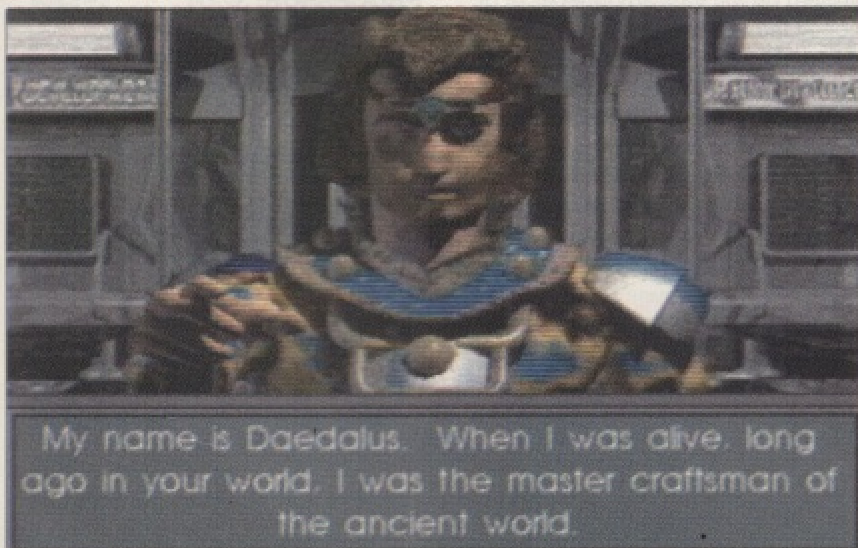
IT'S HERE!



As you read this, the long awaited Full Motion Video module will have been released and selling in a few independent shops around the country. The unit, selling for the bargain price of £199.99. It won't be as widely available as was first suggested, due to the initial shipment of modules being in extremely limited numbers. Units are being built in earnest in Commodore's Phillipine factories, but shipping delays over Christmas mean that only a few hundred have managed to actually reach the country in time for the launch. Could this really be the break that takes the CD32 from being a games console to the first fully successful home multimedia unit? See the news section for more details.

MONITORING SALES

Just a quick bit of news. Software Demon have a large stock of RGB CD32s currently selling for the bargain price of £249. The main difference between these and standard CD machines is that these babies can plug into any monitor, provided you have the right cabling.



SIMPLY A-MAZE-ING

As you read this, Electronic Arts stunning new CD adventure *The Labyrinth Of Time*, a first for the CD32 in that it's the first PC CD-ROM game to be converted to the CD32, will be in the shops. PC CD has been running for yonks, as games like *Rebel Assault* and *The 7th Guest* clearly show, so expect something fairly spectacular when you load it up. Just to wet your appetite, the game features the rather updated plot of King Minos and the minotaur's labyrinth. This time around, if you work through the maze you can control all of time and space! Of course, there are all the same enemies and traps to be found, and a basic knowledge of the original legend will be a help! The whole thing is controlled using a simple icon interface, which paves the way for some very interesting puzzles.

To show you how padded the disk is, the game contains over 1800 hi-res images, over 25 Meg of sound and some of the most photorealistic game images ever seen. *The Labyrinth Of Time* is in the shops now, costing just £24.99

THE CD ALTERNATIVE



Huckleberry Hound on CD now.

Alternative Software, the self proclaimed bastions of low priced, high quality software, have stepped into the marvellous CD world at last. Their first disk, under the unlikely name of 'The Famous Collection', has already been seen on the PC, but is now being converted for the CD32 and contains seven of Alternative's licensed games, with the aim being to provide a disk for all ages. For the older user, there's *Bully's Sporting Darts* and Galactic *Warrior Rats. Popeye, Huckleberry Hound* and *The Munsters* fill out the mid range, and younger users get to play with Sooty and Postman Pat. The entire package costs just £29.99, and will be released in April. For more information, call Alternative on 0977 797777.

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CLASH OF THE CONSOLES

With the CD32, the Amiga is now part of the console world. Paul Rand, editor of CVG, casts his eye over the new generation.

There have been some changes in the computer gaming industry. From the time of the old 8-bit machines like the Spectrum and C64, the games business lurched up to 16-bit with the Amiga and Atari ST then split in two distinct schools – those sticking with their computers and those marching off to join the expanding consoles market. Now, however, there's even a more difficult choice to make than before. The software companies are gearing up for it, there's millions upon millions of dollars/pounds/yen/groats being tossed into it, and practically every system is designed to use it – it's Compact Disc, the circular, silver sphere that those in 'the know' reckon is going to change the face of gaming forever. But let's not start to get overly excited just yet. Contrary to what you may have read elsewhere, compact disc cannot sing, cannot dance, cannot cook the dinner and cannot pilot a Boeing 767. CD is a big, slow hard drive, and don't let anybody tell you otherwise. It's a medium which gives vast storage space – 550 Mb, in fact, but it takes the equivalent of forever to pull information from it, because of the way it was designed – it's great for playing top-quality music, but a bit of a sloth when it comes to games information. Don't let that put you off the platform, though. It is going to happen, whether you like it or not, and companies are finding new and better ways of using CD. And let's face it, with 550Mb of space to fill, you're going to get some BIG games. There are an array of new machines to choose from – here's a rundown of what they are, what they can do and what software is available for them.

3DO



Panasonic's 3DO.

Launched in the USA in October 1993 and set to travel over The Pond by Spring of this year, 3DO is the brainchild of Trip Hawkins, former boss of software giant Electronic Arts, who left that firm to set up The 3DO Company three years ago. The machine which really got everybody talking about the CD platform, 3DO came into being thanks to the backing of financial big boys such as Japanese hardware company Matsushita and America's answer to British Telecom, AT&T.

Based around 32-bit RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Chip) technology, 3DO has the capability to deliver. Its array of custom chips give it the necessary 'oomph' in the graphics department, and because it's a Compact Disc machine there's the capacity to create huge games. But did you know that 3DO wasn't originally planned to be a CD system? It was, as a matter of fact, supposed to be the base for an interactive cable system, allowing for home shopping and interactive TV, among other things. However, the technology isn't readily available for such a set-up so the CD was attached, creating the machine we see today.

Although 3DO was seen as the great white hope for the games industry, the actual games are taking a long time to materialise. Software production is underway, but there's very little out there at present, and what's available isn't of tip-top quality. For instance, the game which comes with the machine, Creative Dynamics' *Crash 'n' Burn*, is little more than an arcade driving game with guns – it looks good (the 3D tracks are particularly impressive) but gameplay is bland and at times frustrating. There is quality software on the way, we're told, from such software luminaries as Electronic Arts (who are converting their biggest cartridge hits to 3DO like *PGA Tour Golf* and *John Madden's Football*), Ocean (busily producing a handful of titles for the machine, including a big summer 1994 movie license) and others.

Although much was expected of the machine, 3DO has arrived with more of a whimper than a bang.



Crash N Burn comes supplied with the 3DO.

Severely lacking in software, companies developing for the system really need to pull their fingers out and get titles on the shelves if they wish to see a return on the vast amounts of money they have invested. This is a potentially winning system, and the firms backing it with serious sums of cash aren't going to abandon it in a hurry. But they need to drop the price of 3DO (which currently stands at a ridiculous $699.99) and 'persuade' developers to hurry up with decent software in order to make the 3DO a serious contender in the new, rapidly moving marketplace.

TECH SPEC
PROCESSOR: 32-bit
SPEED: 12.5MHz
RESOLUTION: 640x480 pixels
GRAPHICS: 64 million pixels per second animation
COLOURS: 24-bit. 32,000 on-screen from 16.7 million palette
SOUND: 8-channel, stereo 16-bit CD
PRICE: $699.99, price drop of $300 rumoured

»

FULL MOTION VIDEO



Star Trek 6 is just one of the films now on Video CD.

It could be that these CD machines may not ultimately be used for gaming at all – no-one has yet come up with a particularly unique game on the platform and until they do there will be some scepticism as to whether compact disc is indeed 'the future of gaming'. But don't worry if you're thinking of purchasing one of these new systems - there's a little box of tricks available soon for all of them that may eventually allow you to throw out your video recorder! FMV (Full Motion Video) is a term which is bandied about throughout the games industry but as they stand, all of the CD machines – with one exception – can produce real full-screen, full-motion video effects at the required rate of 30 frames a minute, the same as you see on TV and film. Soon, however, you'll be able to buy an MPEG-compatible cartridge (CD-i already has one, which is a massive boost for that system) which will let you do just that. Standing for Motion Pictures Experts Group, MPEG is the motion video standard which can not only run full-screen motion video at the correct speed but also run up to 72 minutes of video and audio simultaneously. And while this should improve the look and sound of games being produced to MPEG standard (CD-i *7th Guest* looks stunning) it's in another area which MPEG could gain most success – Digital Video. A clutch of Hollywood movie companies are in negotiations to not only bring their films out on VHS videotape, but also compact disc. Because it's digital, picture quality is far better than VHS can offer, and the only drawback is that, because of the 72 minute limit, most offerings would come on two discs.

JAGUAR


Atari's Jaguar.

Commodore's great rival, Atari, was successfully seen off in the 16-bit computer war when the Amiga was released against the less-powerful 520ST. Atari themselves have also contributed to seeing off an array of their own machines thanks to poor marketing. The Jaguar, however, looks likely to be a massive success for the firm which has a thing about naming its systems after big cats.

Having been in development for three years, the Jaguar finally roared in December 1993 at a very reasonable $200. The most powerful of the new systems available, Jaguar boasts 64-bit processing power which can pump up to 55 million instructions per second (MIPS), as well as two custom chips, Tom and Jerry, which handle Jaguar's superior graphics and sound. Tom is a peach when it comes to picture processing. There's a blitter which handles the movement of large objects around the screen, as well as an object processor that deals with sprite manipulation. A memory controller is included to juggle the 2Mb of on-board RAM, and a graphics processor allows the 720x576 screen resolution and animation speeds of up to 850MPS. Jerry is the custom chip which deals with both the DSP (Digital Sound Processor), giving crystal clear sonics, as well as a 13.3Mhz 68000 chip for controller purposes.

Because of the incredible speeds at which Jaguar is capable of shifting objects around the screen, expect to see a lot of polygon-based 3D games becoming available. Jaguar can handle literally thousands of polygons at once without any loss of frame rate – one of the first games in fact, the F1 driving sim *Chequered Flag 2*, is looking so impressive as to put Sega's *Virtua Racing* coin-op to shame!

Jaguar is the most unusual of the current crop of new games systems as it's the only one which is cartridge based. Because of advances in data compression technology, Atari are able to create carts containing the equivalent of 400Mbits of storage space – that's 25 times the size of a normal Sega Mega Drive or Super Nintendo cartridge, for around the same price. But if you feel the need to move into the compact disc age, a double-speed CD drive will be released in the summer for £150.


Chequered Flag 2 shows the Jaguar's superb graphic capability in action.

Atari have by far the most impressive machine on the market in the Jaguar, and it only remains to be seen whether they can successfully sell it into the marketplace. Demand for the console is massive, but stocks of Jaguar in the US are said to be ridiculously low. If Atari can match demand they've got a sure-fire winner on their hands – software firms which were initially sceptical are now falling over themselves to develop for the machine, and while the cartridge format may lend itself to the sort of titles we've seen on Sega and Nintendo machines, the size of the media and the power of the system should allow for more diverse games than endless Mario and Streetfighter clones, and when the CD drive appears then Jaguar will definitely be *the* games machine to own.

TECH SPEC
PROCESSOR: 64-bit
SPEED: 55 million instructions per second
RESOLUTION: 720x576 pixels
GRAPHICS: 850 million pixels per second animation
COLOURS: 16.7 million
SOUND: DSP with 13.3Mhz 68000
PRICE: £199.99 on UK release

CD-i


Philip's CD-i.

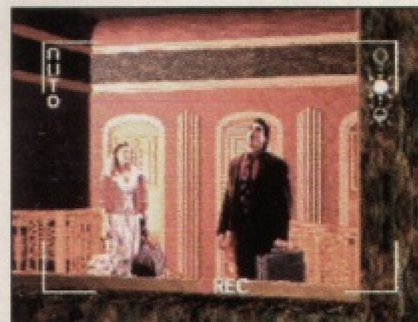
Many people don't realise this, but Philips' CD-i player has been available since 1991. Philips are the firm who originally invented the Compact Disc, so there's some pedigree behind this system. However, CD-i didn't exactly take the world by storm, mainly for three reasons; marketing of the machine wasn't of the highest calibre, there wasn't a lot of software available for the machine, and the buying public really didn't know what use CD-i was to them. Now, Philips has invested in advertising for their baby and according to their PR people, CD-i is selling better than ever, although at time of going to press we couldn't tie them down on an exact figure. Make of that what you will.

As far as the machine itself is concerned, it's quite an impressive piece of equipment. At its heart is a Motorola 608040 processor, which is up to 32-bit quality, with 1Mb of on-board RAM which is used as a buffer to assist in CD loading times. As far as graphics are concerned, CD-i is versatile. In normal mode, 384x280 resolution is on offer; on the other hand, you can choose 384x560 in interlace mode 768x280 double resolution or 768x560 high resolution. Sound is of a high quality, as you'd expect from the makers of CD and other hi-fi products. CD Audio mode has up to 1.2 hours of digital audio, whilst in CD interactive modes there's a selection of varying quality, depending upon how much storage space is available for sound and music.

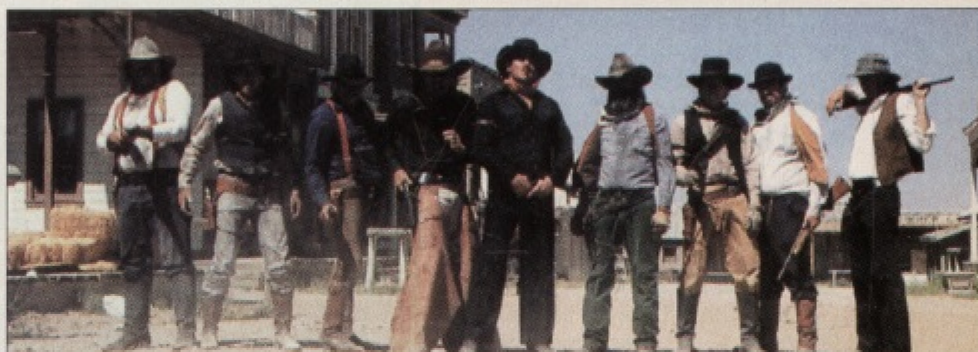
Whereas the first titles for CD-i were admittedly crude, we're now seeing software of an increasingly high quality coming through. Games such as *Inca* and *Kether* boast excellent graphics along with reasonably enjoyable gameplay, but the most impressive disc we've yet seen is *Voyeur*, an interactive movie starring Robert Culp (who you may remember starred in 70's show I, Spy alongside Bill Cosby if you're old or caught it recently on late night television) which utilises full-motion video techniques together with 'real' computer graphics to portray the action. You play a peeping Tom, spying on Hawke Manor the week-end before powerful industrialist Reed Hawke (Culp) announces his intention to run in the United States presidential campaign. It's your task to collect videotape evidence linking Hawke to a particularly nasty crime, or alternatively to gather clues and warn a member of the Hawke household of a plot against them. The game has received some media attention thanks to its use of scantily-clad young ladies in some sections of the game, but there's nothing really OTT in there apart from some strong language, which can be turned off by entering a code.

There's a clutch of big name games in production, including Virgin's *The 7th Guest* and coin-op gun game *Mad Dog McCree*, as well as the old Sullivan Bluth arcade hit *Space Ace*, all of which should show off CD-i's graphic capabilities to a fair degree. But what is attracting most attention is the fact that it's the first machine with a Full Motion Video cartridge available, which allows the running of Digital Video on the machine.

TECH SPEC
PROCESSOR: Motorola 608040
SPEED: 15MHz
RESOLUTION: 384x280, 768x560 or a combination of the two
COLOURS: Up to 32,768 from 16.7 million palette
GRAPHICS: Capable of full screen, full motion video with DV cartridge
SOUND: CD Audio up to 1.2 hours, ADPCM Level A up to 2.4 hours, Level B up to 4.8 hours, Level C up to 9.6 hours
PRICE: £399.99 for basic system



(Right) *Voyeur* shows off the FMV capability of the machine. (Below) The Digital Dirty Dozen!



CD32



Commodore's CD32.

The vast majority of you will doubtless own an Amiga, otherwise why on earth would you be reading this particular organ? The Amiga has been the lifeblood of Commodore ever since it launched the A500, and subsequent Amigas have been bigger, better and packing more processor power than its previous incarnation. Commodore have dabbled in the keyboardless side of gaming in the past with the C64 console (basically a C64 without the buttons) which sank without trace when the console market was gearing up to go 16-bit with the Mega Drive and SNES.

This time, however, it's a different matter altogether. Commodore have something of a coup on its hands in the CD32, as it's the world's first true 32-bit CD-based game system (CD-i, although up to 32-bit standard, is really only a customised 16-bit). Based around A1200 technology, CD32 is also the least expensive of the CD machine around at present, coming in at an attractive £299.99 – especially impressive when you consider that CD32 has on-board not only the A1200's impressive AGA chipset giving processing speed of 14MHz, but also a double speed compact disc drive which can transfer data at 300k per second.

Many people were worried that software companies would be reticent to release CD games for CD32, and for a while that was true, but now it's quite simply not the case.

Admittedly, many titles on compact disc are straight port-overs from the A1200, but more and more games are being made or planned exclusively for CD32.

The best yet has to be Mindscape's *Liberation*. Written and designed by Tony Crowther, *Liberation* is the sequel to his successful RPG *Captive*. You again control the four droids which you used to escape from prison, only this time the game is set in a sprawling futuristic city, where the aim is to uncover a plot by the authorities who are imprisoning people for crimes which they did not commit. I've seen a lot of games on compact disc and, for my money, this is the best on *any* system to date; don't expect to see reams of digitised video footage because there isn't even so much as a screen of it. *Liberation* is essentially the same as *Captive*, but it's much bigger, has many more elements to it and has even better graphics, which this time round are texture-mapped.

If the thought of role-gaming doesn't exactly grab you, there's the usual variety of games available or on the way. If it's a straight beat-'em-up you're after, there's *Mortal Kombat* coming soon from Virgin. Alternatively, flight sim buffs should look north to Manchester, where those Ocean boys are said to be beavering away at CD32 conversions of the brilliant sequel to *F29 Retaliator TFX*, as well as the soon-to-appear follow-up to *Epic*, the equally impressive-looking *Inferno*. CD32 hasn't gone great guns in the States, but it's attracting an increasingly large audience in the UK and Europe. And with a promising price drop of £100 expected early in 1994, Commodore look certain to have another success on their hands with CD32.

TECH SPEC
PROCESSOR: 32-bit
SPEED: 14MHz
RESOLUTION: 320x256 up to 1280x512
COLOURS: Up to 256 from 16 million palette
GRAPHICS: AGA chipset
SOUND: 4 channel, stereo 8-bit CD
PRICE: £299.99

MEGA-CD


Sega's Mega-CD.

What do you do when you have the biggest-selling console on the market, yet everyone around you is gearing up to launch CD games machines and you're rather worried that the cartridge format could get pushed to one side? Do you scrap your cartridge machine and release a brand new, all-singing, all-dancing compact disc system? Well you could, but that would render you existing console obsolete. Why not instead launch an add-on for the console that allows buyers to play CD software, yet still have a cartridge platform that allows you to keep on releasing software that has been successful for years?

That's essentially what Sega did with Mega-CD. The machine had been touted for some time, and when it was finally released the console magazine industry breathed a huge sigh of relief – after all, the console game prices war had been raging for a while, as had the argument over whether cartridge games were too similar to one another, and this system was seen as the perfect way for the console boys to diversify into more grown-up gaming.

Unfortunately, that doesn't seem the way that the Mega-CD is going. Although there's some interesting gubbins inside the machine (the best being Mega-CD's version of SNES Mode 7 which allows sprite expansion effects) the software that's being produced is generally quite good. The first games, such as *Night Trap* and *Sewer Shark*, were digitised graphics heavy but severely lacking in gameplay, and more recent offerings such as *Silpheed*, while giving more game for your money, still don't possess much more than flashy visuals. One game, *Thunderhawk* from Amiga publishers Core Design, has bridged the gap between graphics and playability, using the sprite manipulation techniques available to Mega-CD to create a visually stunning as well as highly playable 3D helicopter combat blaster.

That's not the only problem with Mega-CD. While it was generally believed that when CD happened prices of software would fall, Mega-CD games have stayed the same price as cartridge titles and, in some cases, are actually higher. Mind you, companies are attempting to rectify this state of affairs; Konami, for instance, have released a conversion of the *Lethal Enforcers* coin-op (complete with plug-in gun) on both Mega Drive and Mega-CD – they're the same game, but the compact disc version is a tenner cheaper than its cartridge cousin.

Compared to the latest machines, Mega-CD looks dated. Screen resolution is poor, especially when running full motion video, and sound, unless it's proper audio CD, is little better than that which the Mega Drive's sound chip squawks out. If you have a Mega Drive already, it may be worth taking a look at Mega-CD because at £200 it's the cheapest way of jumping onto the compact disc bandwagon, but it's the poor relation to the rest.


Core's Thunderhawk – one of the few great Mega-CD titles.

TECH SPEC
PROCESSOR: 16-bit 68000
SPEED: 12.5MHz
RESOLUTION: 320x200
COLOURS: 64 from 512 palette, 16 when running full motion video
GRAPHICS: 80 sprites on-screen
SOUND: 8-channel PCM
PRICE: £200 (excluding price of Mega Drive)

»

CD32 GAMES

How many? Mark Patterson reels in shock as he sees the sheer numbers of CD32 games coming. Hold back the floodgates no more.

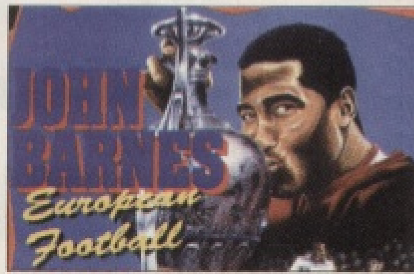
JOHN BARNES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER BUZZ

£14.99

Is it me or do the words 'John Barnes' and 'International' not belong in the same sentence? Whatever the case, it hasn't stopped this game appearing.

The easiest way to describe it is as an updated version of the Commodore 64 classic *International Soccer*. If you can't remember that far back, it, like *John Barnes*, is a simple, side-to-side scrolling football game with very few thrills. In fact, I prefer the older game. While *John Barnes* contains such things as a free kick designer and CD soundtrack, the game itself just isn't playable. It's not fast enough and the controls aren't all that responsive particularly when compared to disk-based titles like *Sensible-Soccer*.

The action is limited as well,. and is very much a case of kick and run football, the likes of which you



You have to feel sorry for John, starring in a game worse than his international career.

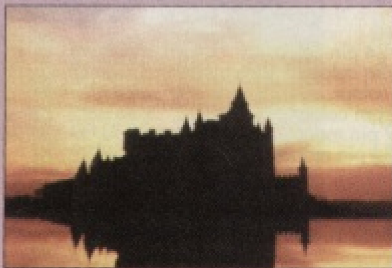
wouldn't even see at Highbury. The standard tactic is to hoof the ball as soon as you get it, and hope that at some point it ends up in the net.

The sad fact is that this just isn't a good game, and I have more chance of getting an England place than poor old Barnsey. There may not be much of a choice when it comes to football games on the CD32, but that's no reason to buy this one.

45%

CASTLES 2 INTERPLAY

£29.99


If things aren't going well with the pope, try bribing him with some land.

This game is set in the fourteenth century, and you are a local lord who's out to become king of Bratagne. Several other lords also have their eye on the throne, and now the Church has intervened so you have to start crawling to the Pope if you want to get that kingship.

The route to the top involves grabbing as much land as possible, fighting the occasionally battle and keeping in with the church. The manual goes to great lengths to explain the politics between the various factions, but it doesn't really make any difference to the game.

The land is divided up into over a dozen territories, each of which has one of four natural resources, wood, gold, iron and food. You need all four of these to construct a castle and raise an army, so if you're missing any, you have to trade with your enemies or go without. Once you've got a few territories you can start buttering up the Pope by giving him any spare money or land you have.

Once you've consolidated your land and are sharing a border with your enemies, the game starts to slow down. Invading another territory is tricky because, even if you win a battle, your army is depleted leaving you open to invasion from other powers. The game has a few sub-plots but this doesn't alter the fact that nothing much happens. and you don't need to do much to complete it. Just keep buttering up the Church who will eventually allow you to apply for the job as king, at which point all the other powers will attack you, to no avail, as you've spent the last half-hour building up your army. When it does come to a battle you can either let the computer sort out your tactics, which saves a lot of time and hassle, or coordinate the mayhem yourself, which invariably results in defeat. *Castles 2* is a disappointment when compared to its playable predecessor.

63%

ARABIAN NIGHTS BUZZ

£14.99

This disc goes to prove one thing, you don't need masses of video bites and lengthy CD soundtracks to make a good game. With *Arabian Nights* you simply get the same quality action you get on floppy disk.

The only thing this has in common with the original Arabian Nights legends is that the main character is called Sinbad; although this one's given up sea-faring for a spot of gardening. Still, with baggy trousers, a traditional fez on his head, and a sword given to him by Sinbad Senior, he is destined to become a hero.

While indulging in a spot of late night pruning, he sees the local princess, Laila, being carried off into the night by a creature summoned up by the evil Vizier. Realising that if he told anyone what he'd seen they'd probably think he'd spent too much time in the mushroom patch, he sets out to rescue the Princess himself.

The resulting adventure is one of



Arabian Nights was good first time round, and it's unmissable at this price.

the best platform games of 1993. It combines masses of levels with taxing gameplay as you hack 'n' slash your way through the Vizier's evil henchmen.

There are a few pick-ups for extra lives, energy and weapons, but these are few and far between, especially on the later levels.

Arabian Nights doesn't have the kind of flashy features of other CD games, but what it does have is plenty of playability and enough of a challenge to keep you hooked for a long time.

90%

ALFRED CHICKEN MINDSCAPE

£29.99


Alfred can kill enemies by launching himself beak-first at them.

Who knows why Mindscape chose a chicken as a hero, but it obviously worked, with this game becoming one of their biggest sellers of '93. Alfred is a bit brighter than your average chicken – cut his head off and he won't run around spraying blood everywhere. So, when his mates are kidnapped by the evil, robotic Meka-Chickens, he sets out to rescue them and destroy all other enemies of chicken-kind.

The graphics are reminiscent of *Robocod*, but fortunately the game doesn't play the same way. Alfred is a totally bizarre character and unlike any other platform game star. To dispose of his enemies, he has to drop beak first on top of them, which as it happens, is quite a tricky manoeuvre. To make things easier you can collect a pot of jam which, for some reason, outfits Alfred with a supply of bombs which he can lob at his enemies.

Like the A1200 version, the graphics are really excellent, with neat, colourful sprites and some very smart levels. But what really makes the game a winner is its overall quirkiness. Collect watering-cans to gain extra lives, open a can of worms to get a shield, and balance on pop cans to reach higher platforms. It's not all leaping and killing though, there are puzzles to be solved, bonus games to be played and secret rooms to be found. Altogether these elements make *Alfred Chicken* completely addictive and totally weird. One of the best platform games out on CD and, like *Arabian Nights*, it's an essential purchase.

86%



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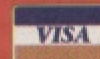
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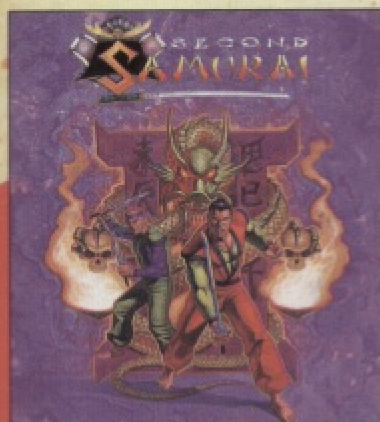


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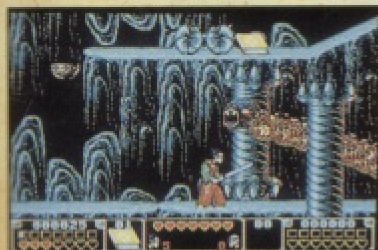
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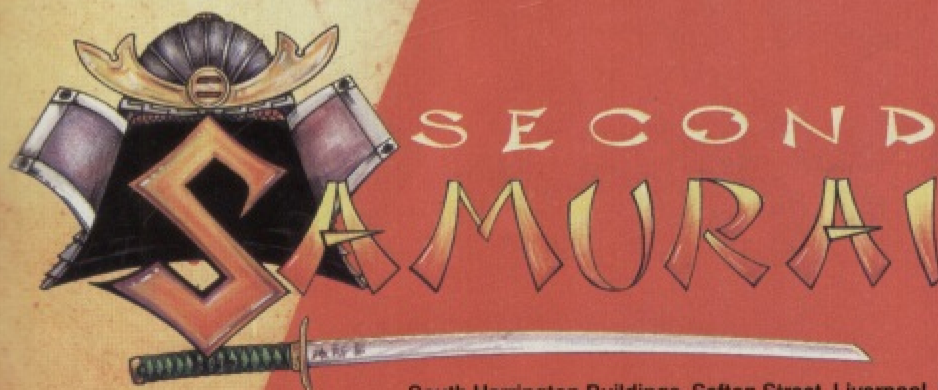
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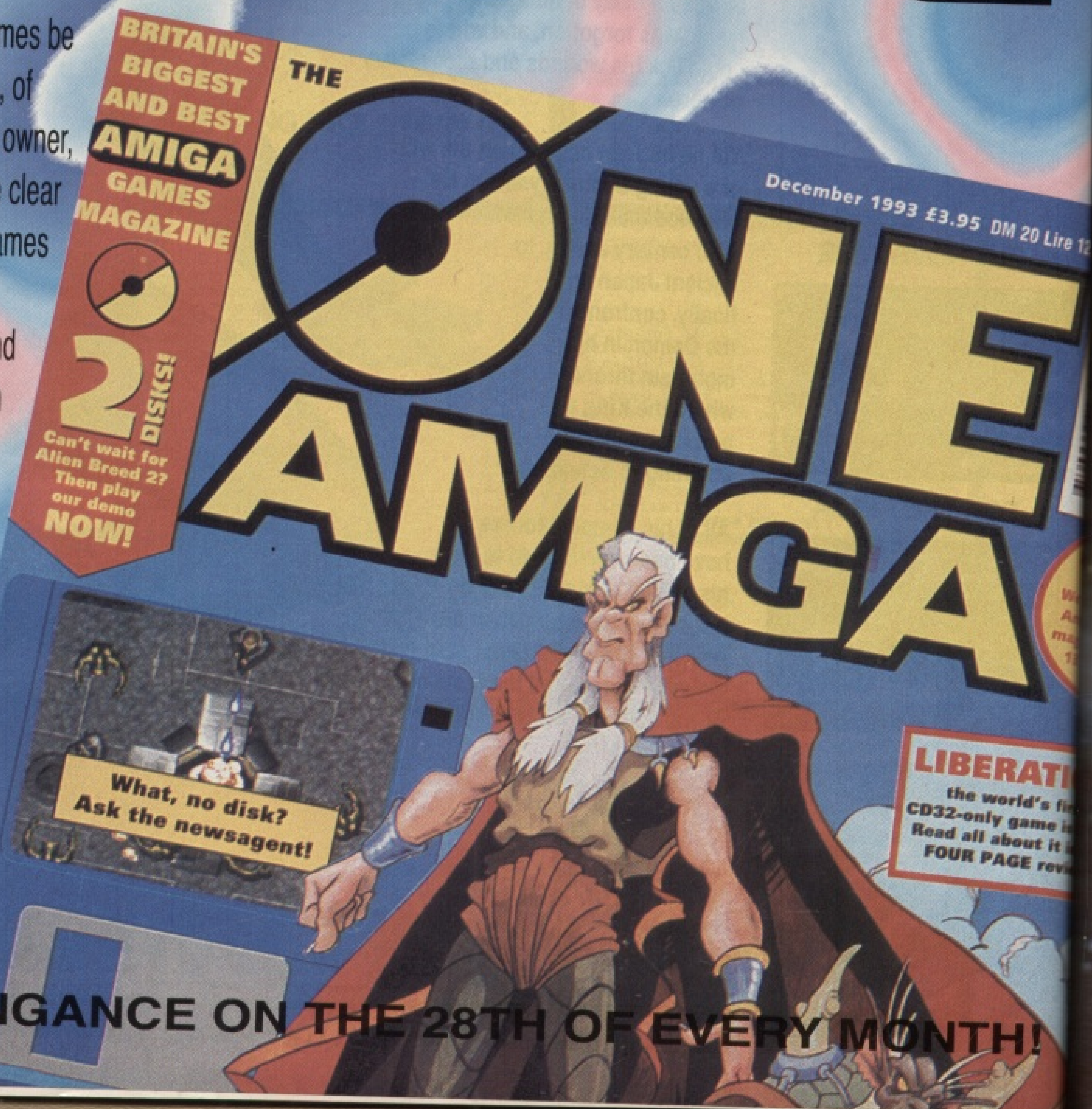
...the story of the second samurai is yet to be written

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Captain's Log, Stardate January 1994: Commander Alison Goddard, of the USS Interplay, reports spectacular sales of their Star Trek – the 25th Anniversary game, based on the hit 60s sci-fi show of the same name. Cockahoop with success, Goddard announces an exclusive competition for CU AMIGA readers in which one lucky reader will get the chance to win all 79 episodes of the original show, as well as five runner-up prizes comprising copies of the new A1200-only game.

Blimey, we've come up with some good competitions in our time, but none so mouth-wateringly drool-inducing as this amazing Star trek compo.

Remember the heady days of the original TV show, with Kirk getting to snog all the alien women while Bones and Spock were constantly at each other's throats? It was all brilliantly over-acted stuff and Interplay's smashing new game captures the atmosphere of the cult show perfectly, right down to the phaser fights and the anonymous security officers always being the first to bite the bullet.

Well, now you can relive every last minute of the 60s space opera thanks to Interplay, who have kindly stumped up the readies for a complete collection of Star Trek videos. What's more, five lucky runners up will also get their sweaty mitts on a copy of Interplay's superb *Star Trek* game.

What more can we say? All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning this brilliant prize is correctly answer the following question:

What is Captain James T. Kirk's middle name? Is it:

A. Tiberius B. Tarquin C. Trigger

Easy, eh? Now jot down your answer on a postcard and send it to: Trekmania Compo, CU AMIGA, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Competition closes February 28th, 1994.

STAR TREK - THE 25th ANNIVERSARY

When we reviewed *Star Trek - the 25th Anniversary* game in our October issue, we raved about how close it was to the original TV series. Aimed specifically at A1200 owners who possess a hard drive, Interplay's *Star Trek* is set to redefine Amiga gaming and take it into strange new worlds!

RULES

1. This competition is not open to any employees of Interplay or EMAP Images.
2. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
3. Closing date for all competition entries is 28th February 1994.
4. Anyone sending in a bribe with their entry will be banned from entering, but Dan will certainly put your money to good use!

Jurassic Pa

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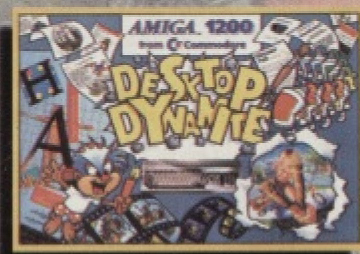


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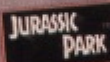
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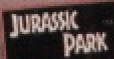

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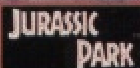

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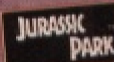

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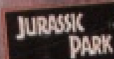

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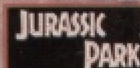


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AMIGA



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SCREEN SCENE

As the chills of winter really start to hit home, why not curl up with a copy of CU and toast yourselves on some of the hottest reviews around. Remember, you only get a hug from a copy of CU AMIGA!

A CU Screen Star is for games scoring 85%-92%. If a game gets one of these, it'll be of lasting quality and you can rest assured that, if you decide to purchase it, you won't be wasting your money.





93% and a game's worth a Superstar. We hardly throw them around, but if a game gets one it'll be completely outstanding.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Another month rockets by, but we just don't have time to stop. Here's another batch of possible hits and maybe future classics, for your perusal.

ISHAR 3

SILMARILS



THE GAMEPLAY: The fourth in the series (if you count *Crystals Of Arborea*), *Ishar 3* continues the tale of the popular role-playing adventures right from the point where the last one left off. Shandar the Black Wizard, the one you spent so much time trying to kill in *Ishar 2*, has lived to tell the tale after all, and is back with a vengeance in the guise of a huge 2,000 year old dragon called Wohratax. Spooky stuff.

WHAT'S NEW: Well, where do I start? You can create your own character at the start of the game, rather than be lumped with a standard one. You can make your own magic potions, develop your character's abilities, choose your party from over one hundred characters and play around with over forty different spells. If that isn't enough for you, you could always sit back and watch the film sequences that link various parts of the game.

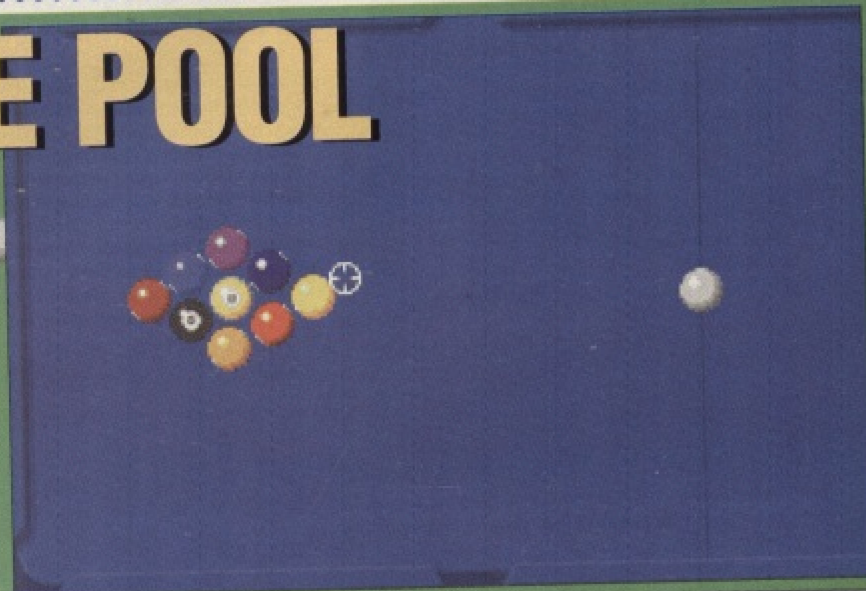
BEHIND THE SCENES: The game is being coded in-house by the same team responsible for all the other *Ishar* titles. Production started just after the second game was completed, so expect some similarities.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: The second game was a huge leap forward from the first, and this one looks like it's going to be a similar step forward. Visually it looks fabulous, and the new game engine means that the game will have far more emphasis on character development than before. We'll have a full work in progress next month.



ARCADE POOL

TEAM 17



THE GAMEPLAY: As you can probably tell from the name, this is an arcade style pool simulator for the Amiga, similar to classic old games like Steve Davis' Snooker. Unlike the Archer Maclean efforts, this one is viewed from above, making for more frantic play. There are a variety of gameplay modes to play in, from simple one and two player options, through 8 ball, 9 ball, speed pool, Killer Pool and a point-scoring single player Challenge mode.

WHAT'S NEW: The 50Hz update on

IMPRESSIONS

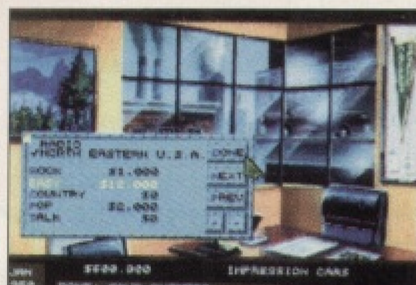
DETROIT

IMPRESSIONS

THE GAMEPLAY: This is a strange one. Here's your chance to be Henry Ford and build a business empire based around an automobile factory. Design a car to your own specifications, and then try to sell it to the world. You are also in charge of building factories and assembly lines, costs and just about everything the real job would entail.

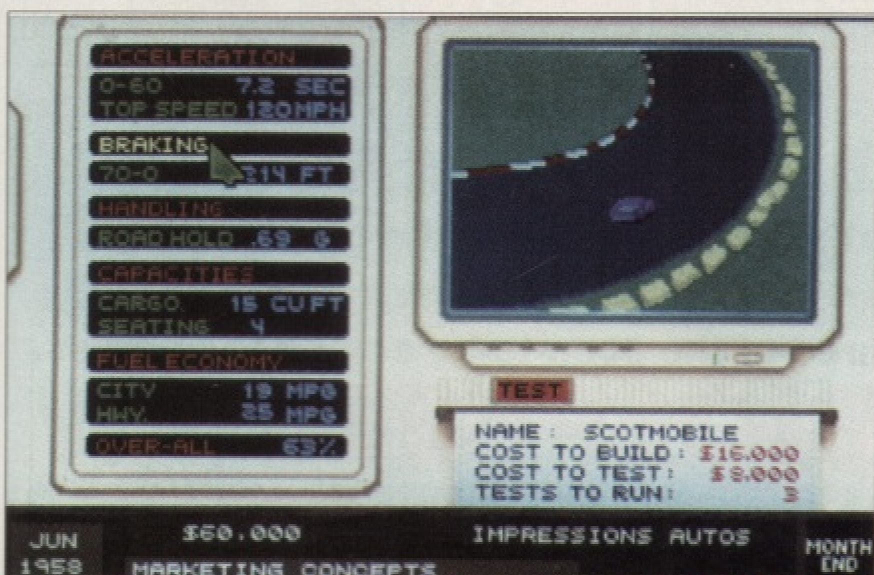
WHAT'S NEW: Just about everything, really. In all my years, I can't think of a single game that has ever tried to do anything approaching this. We've had dozens of car games over the years, but this is really something fresh and original.

BEHIND THE SCENES: The game is being coded by the same team that

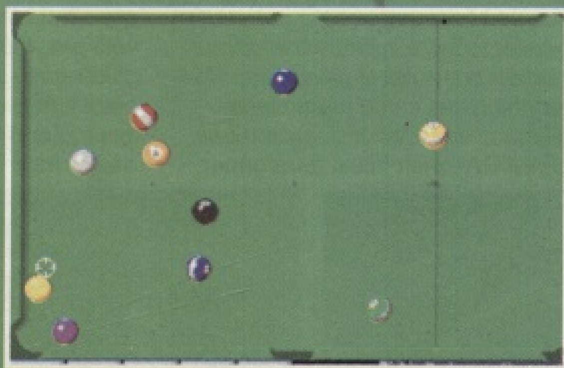


produced the rather smashing *Air Bucks* – another business simulator – so it should be something special.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: It's really hard to predict how this one will do without actually sitting down for a couple of days and playing the thing. The idea is a strong one, but it will never be everyone's cup of tea. Watch out for a full review soon.



the ball, for a start. Team 17 have always been fussy about their screen updates, and this game is no exception. Also, the game checks when loading if you are running it on an AGA machine, and loads the 128 colour graphic set if you are.



BEHIND THE SCENES: Like a lot of Team 17's budget software, this has been written out of house. Italian Mario Savoia approached the Team in September with a demo of the game, and the Wakefield boys and girls were so impressed with it, that they snapped it up.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: Extremely favourable. This kind of game is one that you can keep playing forever, and if it turns out as playable as it looks, it'll be number one. The game is released in February, so we'll have a full review next issue.



BREACH 3

IMPRESSIONS

THE GAMEPLAY: If you've already seen *Breach* and *Breach 2*, you'll know that they are squad based tactical wargames, where a single unit is a single person and all combat is close combat. So successful have these two games been that Impressions have come back with a third, which promises to be even bigger and better.

Select your team, select your weapons and select your scenario, and then get on down there!

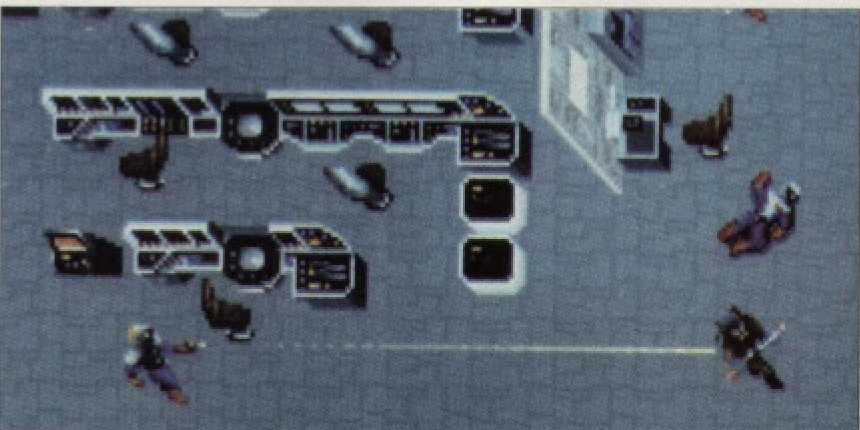
WHAT'S NEW: The CCSI2 on screen game interface. First used in *Rules Of Engagement 2*, the idea is that all the information you could possibly need is on screen all the time. It might seem cluttered to some, but once you know your way around the screen it becomes quite effective. Besides, there are people who could claim that the flight deck of a 747 is cluttered!

BEHIND THE SCENES: The game is being developed by US company



Omnitrend, the development house responsible for so many of Impression's PC games. *Breach 3* has been written as a PC game, with full 256 colour visuals. The colours are cut for the non-AGA machines, but A1200 owners will happily be able to experience the same vivid display.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: This kind of game has always worked well, and the subtle changes in presentation and game style might just be enough to push this one to the top of the pile. We wait and see.





WIP

FROG FROG FROGGING ALONG!

Can there be any development teams backing the Amiga as heavily as Bullfrog? With five new titles in the pipeline, 94 is going to be a hectic time for the Guildford guys and gals. Tony Dillon gets a look at three of the soon-to-be completed games.

BIOSPHERE

As everyone knows, Bullfrog are responsible for the original isometric, raising-and-lowering land game – *Populous* – and since that fine game appeared, a fair few people have imitated that game to almost the point of plagiarism. Now everything has come full circle as Bullfrog unveil – exclusively through CU AMIGA– their latest terraformer, and it looks like it's going to be every bit as good.

This time, though, there's a more eco-friendly story behind it all. You are a freelance planetary engineer, who gets hired by wandering colonists to terraform their destination planet, making it safe for their arrival. Your jobs involve flattening lands to make room for the colony, warding off



Don't let the cute look fool you.



The colonists continually hassle you for help.

or killing dangerous wildlife, planting trees and, interestingly enough, playing around with life on the planet at a genetic level, trying to grow fauna that can solve any problems you might be having.

The game has been in production now for over four years, although it has changed a hell of a lot since its first incarnation. Designed and coded by the US two-man team Excellent Studios, – Richard Reed (code) and Randall Ho (Graphics), the project has been restarted many times, each time being completely redesigned.

The original idea came about after seeing *Populous*, and the game has evolved as other games have come onto the market. It began with a similar isometric view to *Populous*, but that went through a lot of changes before it became the top view game it is now.

If it all sounds a bit *Sim Earth*, that's only because it is...a bit. Don't worry though, this will be far easier to use. After all, this is a game. That isn't to say that it isn't to be taken seriously. Like many Bullfrog games, the planet has a fully working Ecosystem, and life does go on without you. As Alex Trowers, the man responsible for practically everything on this project, explains: 'There's a Bullfrog tradition that says you don't actually have to be there for a game to work. Most other games stop doing anything once you let go of the joystick, but a Bullfrog game will keep going regardless. It's a lot more complex than it looks, though. We've tried to gloss over as much of it as we can. As far as we're concerned, you don't want to be bothered with tons of meaningless information. Everything is shown graphically in this game. If you plant some flowers, then the flowers will start to grow. At any one time, you never have more than three or four icons to control the game with. It isn't as hard to play as *Sim Life* or *Sim Earth*, but I couldn't really tell you if it's any less complex.'

Possibly the most intriguing thing about the game is the genetic control you have. The idea of being able to go down to a base level and genetically alter all forms of life to your own needs adds new flavour to the game.

'It's a fascinating thing. We just wanted to have a lot more control over the game environment, so we came up with the genetic altering.

'One of the guys from Excellent studios came over with a Laboratory program, that was originally intended to be part of something else, but we had so much fun just building armies of plants and then seeing who would outlast who, that it stayed as part of the game. It's quite easy to tailor everything, but it's a real skill to be able to do it well. If you just go one click to far in any direction on a slider, you could wipe out the entire planet!' says Mr Trowers.

Of course, the whole game isn't just about planetary control. For each of the levels, a different group of colonists will require a different type of planet. Pictured on these pages are the yuppie colonists, who are actually quite stupid and will constantly interrupt your work asking you to do things for them. For example, if they need wood, they'll ask you what wood looks like! Other colonists include botanists, so you'll need to keep the plant life going. You'll also find xenophobes, who won't want any kind of life on the planet at all!

Biosphere will be released at some point this year, though no firm release date has yet been set. You'll hear more just as soon as we do.

MAGIC CARPET



It's not easy to stay standing when attacked by eagles.

When the first screenshots of this incredible-looking 3D blaster came into the office, there were raised eyebrows and sharp intakes of breath all round. Possibly the closest to photo-realism the Amiga has come to in a game, *Magic Carpet* could well be the game that shows the world what the A1200 is really capable of.

You can play either sex in this massive adventure, being madly in love with the heir to the throne, who is the opposite sex to you. Sadly, you really don't stand a chance with them as you have no money at all, only one set of clothes and a magic flying carpet. In the real world, of course, a magic flying carpet would be enough to sway most people. Not here, though. Here, if you want to marry royalty, you've got to be loaded, so in *Magic Carpet* you set off on your flying mat and go seek your fortune.

The big news with this game, of course, are the staggering graphics. You have to admit, even still screenshots look incredible, with a real feeling of speed and distance. The entire landscape is generated in real time, and you can fly wherever you want within it, be it low over the trees and valleys, or high over the seas.

Magic Carpet started with Glen Corpes, Bullfrog's resident technical expert and Bullfrog's other 3D game, *Creation*. The whole thing started as a top-down view wargame, then went isometric and finally ended up as a polygon, first person perspective. Then Glen saw the PC texture mapped flight simulator *Comanche*, and *Magic Carpet* was born. Creation used a simple polygon landscape, but *Magic Carpet* contains all sorts of texture maps and light sources, the aim being to make it far better than *Comanche*.

One day, the graphic engine was finished, and the map used with it created an area not completely dissimilar to Scottish highlands. Alex claims that they used to play Enya albums whenever they showed it to anyone, to great relaxing effect. It was right then that they realised that a game was born.

The question was, what sort of a game to make from it. Glen is an

»



In fog, visibility is reduced to near zero.



You'll need to learn to utilise the terrain.



The dinosaurs can get mighty angry if you don't keep them fed.



The colonists admire their new home.


Flying high over one of the towns.

» avid flight simulator hater, driven to distraction by the fact that you can now kill the opposition when they are nothing but dots on screen (ever hear of *Knights Of The Sky*, Glen?). The one rule laid down by him was that the game would not be a flight simulator.

It was head honcho and industry personality Peter Molyneux who came up with the idea of flying on a magic carpet. After all, every other form of flight has already been extensively covered.

The game is essentially mission based, with you travelling around a huge map looking for towns and cities, where you meet people who give you quests, for which they will pay you a small fortune. A mission might involve flying to a certain location to kill a nest of dragons, or delivering a package. This might sound simple, but the maps are enormous, taking five minutes to fly from one side to the other.

To begin with, the landscape is fractally generated, then the graphic designers add the towns and rivers, and finally the whole thing is saved out. Interestingly enough, any IFF image can be turned into a map, so the later levels should be interesting to see.

Almost all of Bullfrog's graphic artists are working on the game, making it look as incredible as possible. All the towns, buildings and other elements in the game have been rendered using 3DS on a Silicon Graphics workstation.

Again, the entire world in the game is a functioning system, with rising and setting tides, and phases of the moon. If you like, you can just sit back and watch the world go on around you. If you sit by the roadside, you can watch people walking around, acting out their own lives.

And, If you don't feel like playing the game, you could just sit back and watch the world work.without you. Don't forget to stick your Enya album on first, of course.


All the buildings have been beautifully rendered.

CREATION

This is another game that has wowed the world, simply through some very effective screenshots. This time, the fully-functioning 3D world is underwater. You are the commander of an under-sea colony base. The people who live there look to you to defend them from the sea and all its dangers, which is quite a nice setting for a pleasantly atmospheric and claustrophobic underwater adventure. Step back Seaquest DSV, this is where the real action is.

Your job is to patrol the seabed looking for any potential danger, and then destroying it. Enemy submarines patrol the waters too, along with fish of all kinds and anything else you would expect to see. The most interesting thing about the aquatic life is that you can capture it and train it. You can have chaff fish, torpedo fish, turret fish and all other weapons, made entirely out of fish. I don't know about you, but I find the idea of firing a torpedo fish at another submarine, and then have them drop some chaff fish to draw the fire quite an amusing one. Maybe you have to be there.

Creation is, at its best, a multi player game. Bullfrog firmly believe that the best kind of game is a multi player game. They treat *Syndicate* as a multi player shoot em up, so *Creation* is essentially a multi player wargame. Instead of controlling huge tanks and the like, you use a single submarine and the landscape itself



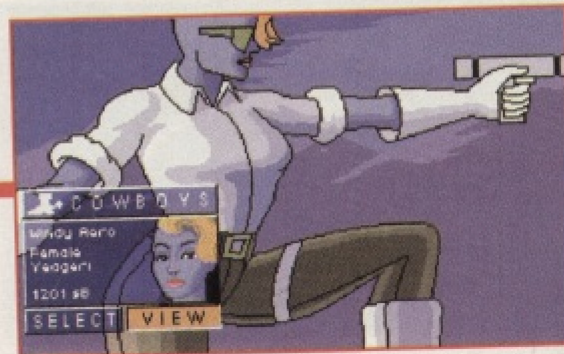
When you target the fish, a scanner tells you exactly what they are.


Have you ever seen the bottom of an iceberg?

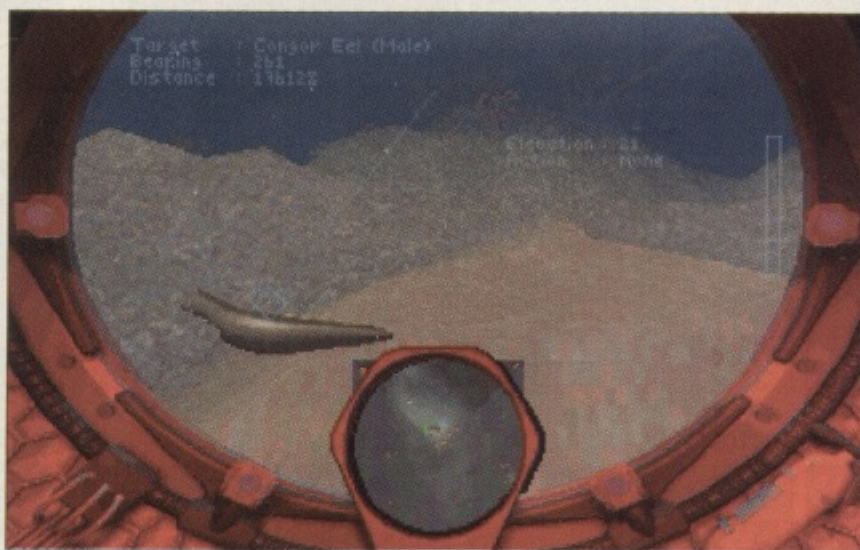

On the final approach to the planet.



As the job gets really hectic, you need to start training people.



Here's just one of the people you can employ.



What could you do with a Conger Eel?

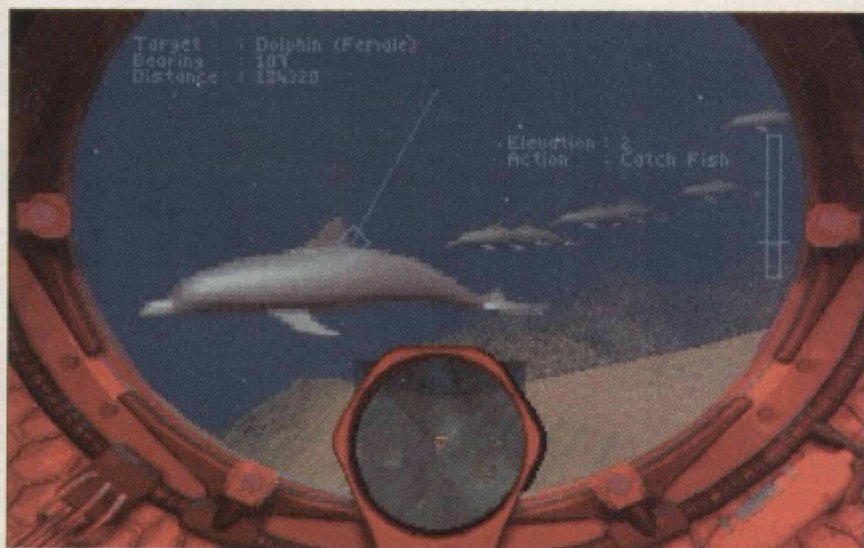
to battle the enemy. Possibly the most useful weapon you will have is the Volcano missile, which causes the sea bed around you to erupt, creating a wall blocking off your opposition. Before long you end up turning the relatively empty seabed into a maze.

The game features the same wonderful graphic system as *Magic Carpet*, only this time things aren't quite so airy and bright. As you plumb the depths of the ocean, things can close in and become quite oppressive. The 3D engine started off quite simple, with basic polygons and very little detail. As the system for *Magic Carpet* evolved, the *Creation* graphics were backwards engineered, taking it from a basic polygon look to something far more dark and sinister.

The final plan for the two games is to link them through their common element – water. As you fly around in *Magic Carpet*, you'll occasionally fly over rivers and lakes. Dipping down into the water loads *Creation*, and leaping out of the water sends you out. It may seem a little pointless, but then it's the little things that count.

Creation looks like it's going to be one hell of a game. Look out for a full review later in the year.

Have you ever wanted to swim with the dolphins? Alex Trowers has!





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Simon the Sorcerer

Tony Gill likes a joke (he must do, or else he wouldn't wear his hair like that!) so we gave him Adventure Soft's latest rib-tickling adventure to review.

The wise old owl who sits in the hollow tree knows the answer to all of your problems. The trouble is trying to get the information out of the dozy bird! If you persevere you will get some useful help, but not before he has told you a million things you never wanted to know.



To help save on your shoe leather, the game provides a map which magically updates itself as you travel around the kingdom. This magic map will transport you to anywhere you have previously visited – unless of course you are currently tied up in a Goblin's Cell!

Any fool can be funny, but you've got to be clever to be witty. A joke attempts to make you laugh, but a witty remark invites you to understand it and, if you do, then you'll feel both amused and pleased with yourself. *Simon the Sorcerer* is very, very witty. It's also easy to tell that it's English, because they've spelt the swear words correctly!

Simon is a graphic adventure game in the same mould as such blockbusters as *Monkey Island* and *Indiana Jones*. Unlike those mega-games which came from America, this game is a home-grown product from a small British company called Adventure Soft. Okay, I know that at this point the wiser heads among you will be pursing their lips and switching into sceptic mode; but that's all right, I like a fight. Right then, just let me slip into my John Bull waistcoat and lace up my Yank-Kicking boots, and we'll begin. (Cue 'Land of Hope and Glory'.)

Let's face it, is it likely that a game from a small, English software house can produce something which can really compare to the games from huge American companies employing legions of art directors, squads of software designers and zillions of dollars? No, it's not likely. Nevertheless, they've only gone and done it.

The plot of this crazy story involves a modern teenager being sucked into a world of wizards and magic. And you'll be surprised to know that he must save this sad kingdom from the bad guy with an unpronounceable name. Nothing new there then. You could say that what we have here is the plot for, 'Adrian Mole Goes to Hobbitland'. In short it's English humour at its best. It's sharp, wicked, and at times a little rude. Simon is a teenager with a dog, an attitude problem and a walkman. The dog is left behind in the early stages of the adventure, but the boy's attitude stays with him to the bitter end. Simon also keeps his walkman available just in case should you pause for thought. If he gets bored waiting for your next great idea, he will remove his wizard's hat, put on the earphones and listen to music until you make your next move.



Sleeping giants block your path. If only you could find a way to wake this sleeping beauty you can be sure he will be able to give you a hand. On the other hand, he just might thump you.



What an innocent-looking cottage. But you never know what mischief lurks inside?



Who is that little creature in the bushes? Why it's our

PICTURES WORTH A THOUSAND PIXELS

The game's scenario takes place against a background of enchanted forests, snow-covered mountains, picturesque villages and dingy dungeons. The characters and incidents in this magical adventure are culled from a variety of folktales which you'll have no difficulty recognising. You'll meet *Billy Goats Gruff, Rapunzel, Jack and the Beanstalk* and *the Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*. All of the graphics are brilliant, with some

GRAPHICS

The stunning graphics which *Simon* contains won much acclaim when the PC version was released. To bring this standard to the Amiga caused them many headaches, but they persevered and appear to have repeated their success.

The specially enhanced A1200 version has all of the 256 colours which the PC has, and it has a cinemascope look to it, owing to the wider and narrower style of the Amiga screen.

Unlike *Monkey Island II* whose backgrounds were first drawn and then scanned, *Simon* is created using a series of sixteen colour overlays. This method not only gives a crisper, and clearer picture, but it also means that the code can be more easily compressed to fit onto fewer disks. If the same technique as *Monkey Island* had been used, this game would have come on fifteen disks!



Behind *Simon*'s cottage is the manure heap. You may wonder what the purpose of all this excrement is. Well one thing is for sure, don't stand too close to *Simon*, for when the manure hits the fan you're going to get more than you bargained for.

THE DARK SIDE

Adventure Soft has a dark side to its personality which lurks in the shadows - Horrorsoft! *Personal Nightmare, Elvira, Elvira II* and *Waxworks*, are the four games which bear the Horrorsoft label. These are the type of games which attracts smaller audiences and have sometimes drawn the attention of moral crusaders to them. Which means everyone is a little embarrassed to admit they have anything to do with them in these politically correct days. However, love 'em or hate 'em, it's unlikely that there will be any more additions to the range. Such has been the popularity of the new Adventure Soft games, and because the team have enjoyed writing the comedy adventures so much, they have decided to drop the old gore games and stick with the fun in future. Australian fans will, however, be sad to see them go, for I do recall that the Horrorsoft games went down a bomb down-under.

of the animated forest scenes reminiscent of Disney's Bambi. As you wander in the forest you'll be accompanied by flitting butterflies, cutesy birds and the occasional wolf. Admittedly, if you happen to have been stuck with a problem for the last two days, the cutest of floppy bunnies will get on your wick, but on the whole I thought it looked really good.

The guy who turned out to be my favourite character, and I'm sure you are going to love him too, is the Swampling. Imagine that you held a birthday party and nobody came – that's the fate of poor Swampling. There he is with a cauldron of mud stew, and nobody to help him eat it. Now surely you won't be as hard-hearted as the rest of the forest creatures? All he wants is someone to drop in for a little while, play a few games, and enjoy a nourishing bowl with him. Euck! The Swampling's house is beautifully drawn, and the animated sequences which take place inside his hollow tree home are guaranteed to make you chuckle.

There is a constant musical background to the game which can be turned off if you like, but in this case I actually found that I liked it – and when did you last hear a reviewer say that? In the interests of balance it should be mentioned that the neighbours called round to say that they thought it was rotten, but then it was 2am.



What a spooky scene – I'll be having nightmares over this one.

TO HINT OR NOT TO HINT?

Adventure games are great fun when you are getting somewhere, but they can drive you nuts when you get stuck. Game producers never know what to do about this problem; should they enclose a hint book with the game, provide a telephone help-line, or just leave you to the tender mercies of Vampyra? In this case Adventure Soft has decided to provide two lines of attack. Firstly there is a built-in mentor in the form of a wise old owl. In the centre of the forest an old owl sits snoozing in a tree. If you speak to the owl he will provide random nuggets of information which will give you clues concerning the sneakier puzzles, but just to keep things fair this information is also mixed in with other homilies such as, 'Always brush your teeth after meals'. As Simon is the original smart-Alec teenager, you can guess what he makes of these remarks.

If the owl's cryptic hints still don't provide enough information to get you out of the mire then you can ring Adventure Soft directly. Each evening between six and seven you can ring 021 352 0847 and put your questions directly to one of the game designers. This service is available because Adventure Soft also wants to talk to you, to find out what you like and what you would like to see in future games.



Now if this doesn't look like a witch's cottage then I am a great, horny toad. You can take a look inside if you dare, but it will all end in tears, I just know it will.

GAME CONTROLS

The game uses those controls which now appears to have become the standard for graphic adventures. No typing is required, so there is no need to guess some unlikely word or phrase to solve a problem. Any objects which have any importance will be indicated as the mouse pointer passes over them by the appearance of their written description on-screen. This does mean that these objects are sometimes deliberately drawn a might small and difficult to find, but in the main this isn't a problem. A full list of possible commands is permanently displayed on the lower half of the screen, and you simply select the commands you wish to use. You can also 'click' on the object you have in your list of possessions to examine or use them. There are a few cases where you must issue a command to combine one object with another, but this is a typical puzzle in these types of games and in most cases is pretty straight forward.



Check out Simon's fabulous hat – you don't get many of those the pound these days.

MANUAL

The game comes with a manual which is almost as funny as the game. This manual is used for the normal anti-piracy protection, which requires you to identify objects on certain pages. The manual's text takes the mickey out of everything, so it will provide you with a couple of extra smiles while you struggle with the game.



Just like in Eastenders, if you can't find someone you want, then go and take a look in the pub for they are sure to be there.

PUZZLES AND CONVERSATION PIECES

The game's puzzles take the usual form of 'find object', 'pick up object', »



» 'use object1 with object2'. To do this kind of thing you have to spend time searching into the nooks and crannies of the screen with the mouse pointer to find those objects that may be lurking. There are also lots of humans, monsters and other weird races that you will encounter, and then you can have conversations with them. These conversations are managed by you reading what is being said by the other person, then selecting your reply from a list of possible options. This chat normally degenerates into a slanging match as Simon can't seem to resist insulting everyone, and you won't be able to resist the temptation to get into trouble as well. For me these conversations are the high spots of the game, and Simon's rye comments are genuinely funny. For example, there is a point when Simon is talking to some gents in a pub, and he refers to them as wizards. One gent asks Simon why he thinks that they are wizards. To this Simon swiftly replies, 'Well when I move the mouse-pointer over you, the computer says "Wizards".'

What helps make this joke funny is the fact the game designer has being doing his darndest up to that point to make you forget that you are playing a computer game.

WHERE'S THE COMPUTER GONE?

The fact that the designer has done such a good job of hiding the machinery behind the gameplay is worthy of note. One of the aims of a good game is to create the illusion that you are involved in a real situation and if the computer gets in the way of the action the illusion is spoiled. Having to change a floppy disk, or wait for something to be loaded, is the kind of thing that constantly reminds you that everything is being controlled by the box of silicon beneath your fingers. Simon's floppies have been carefully put together to help alleviate this problem. Duplicate copies of the same code have been put on each of the nine disks to save you having to swop. *Monkey Island* is almost unplayable from floppy disk as it obviously never occurred to anyone that the game wouldn't be installed on hard disk.

One clever touch that this game has, which others would do well to copy, is the way it handles your interaction with other characters. If you intrude into a scene where two people are having a conversation, and you interrupt them by asking a question, the characters treat you in the same way as real-life characters would. Instead of the computer obviously stopping their conversation dead and switching into reply mode, they attempt to answer you, then pick up where they left off instead of simply standing motionless waiting for your next input. The computer characters will also amend their subsequent dialogue if your comment influenced anything. In fact, the script has been especially constructed with loads of these 'jump points' in it to ensure that it can deal with most situations. This is not something which you see too often in other games and it really gives a different feel to a scene. This is a game where the computer has been hidden as much as possible.

Nothing is perfect, so where is the downside you may ask? If pressed (and I don't really want to say anything which detracts from this super game) my only criticism of the game would be that the gameplay tails off a little towards the end. During the initial stages there are a million things to do and see, and there are many parallel paths for you to wander. Towards the latter stages things get restricted, the path gets straight and narrow, the puzzles become simpler, and more and more you become a spectator to animated sequences. I began to feel that the game designer had just received the delivery deadline from the publishers, so everything was being wound up swiftly to meet a deadline. The first quarter of the game could take a fortnight to figure out – the last quarter could take an evening. I am willing to be taken to task for that comment, perhaps you wont agree with it, but it's only a small gripe after all. To get full enjoyment out of this adventure you should forget about trying to solve the puzzles and getting through to the end, for the real fun comes from deliberately doing things that you suspect won't solve the problem. In this way you will discover what fun the game designer put in to teach you a lesson for being rude or silly. There are no illogical puzzles in the game, and simple persistence will see you through to the end. Hardened adventurers will solve most of the game without too much difficulty, so if you would like a fun adventure, but have never been successful with them in the past, this is the one for you. CU



There are a couple of nice girls in the bar who just might take a fancy to a nice, clean-cut boy like Simon. On the other hand they look and talk like a couple of Valkeries, so watch your chat-up lines if you don't want to end up with a thick ear.

THE OLD FIRM

Adventure Soft is a family firm. Mike the father designs and codes the games. His wife manages and deals with the administration. Simon, the eldest son, writes the storyline and the text conversations. Finally, there is the youngest son Jonathan who is used as a playtester. To this core, five top graphic artists have been added to complete a team which is currently kicking all sorts of hell out of the best that the biggest software companies in the world can muster. With two more artists being trained up to join the existing team, Adventure Soft is a company who has proved they can trade blows with the best and win. Mike gets very upset when reviewers say that Adventure Soft games are as good as Lucasfilms. What he wants to hear someone say is, 'Lucasfilms games are just as good as Adventure Soft!'



'Strong in the arm and thick in the head'. The smithy doesn't have much to say for himself, but his skills are invaluable to the solving of more than one puzzle.

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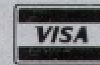
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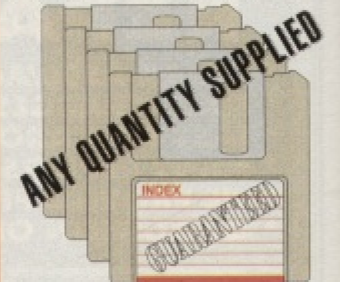


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GOBLINS 3


You can call up this map of the game at any point.

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Those cheeky French chappies have created yet another comical graphic adventure with plenty of amusing animations and one less 'i' in the title than the last one. If you've followed the series, you'll know that the number of 'i's actually relates to the number of Goblins in the game, so we've moved from the rather simplistic three of Gobliiins to the more standard single character of this one. Not that it makes it any better a game, you understand. This still has the same problems of the original and the sequel, which I'll explain just as soon as I've told you what the game is actually about.

You play Blount, the Goblin journalist out for a scoop, and a big story just happens to have fallen onto your lap. The keeper of the Key To Eternity or some such nonsense has died, and the key has gone missing, along with its successor. So, you do what any journo would do, and that's set off on one of the weirdest missions ever to recover both artifacts. Sounds easy, doesn't it?

With limited objects, most of the time it's a case of trial and error to solve the puzzles.

The big problem, of course, is that it is quite easy. The problem with a game that has no text and the only icons concern a game map and loading and saving is that you are extremely limited in the actions you can actually do. Clicking with the left button on something picks it up or looks at it, and clicking with the right button brings up the inventory. All you need to do is scan the mouse pointer around the screen to pick out all the objects and important points, and then use everything you can think of on anything you can find, and you'll soon complete each screen. Logical or not, all puzzles can be solved in no time at all, and if you're stuck for a hint, there's an on line solution in the form of jokers that tell you how to complete each screen.

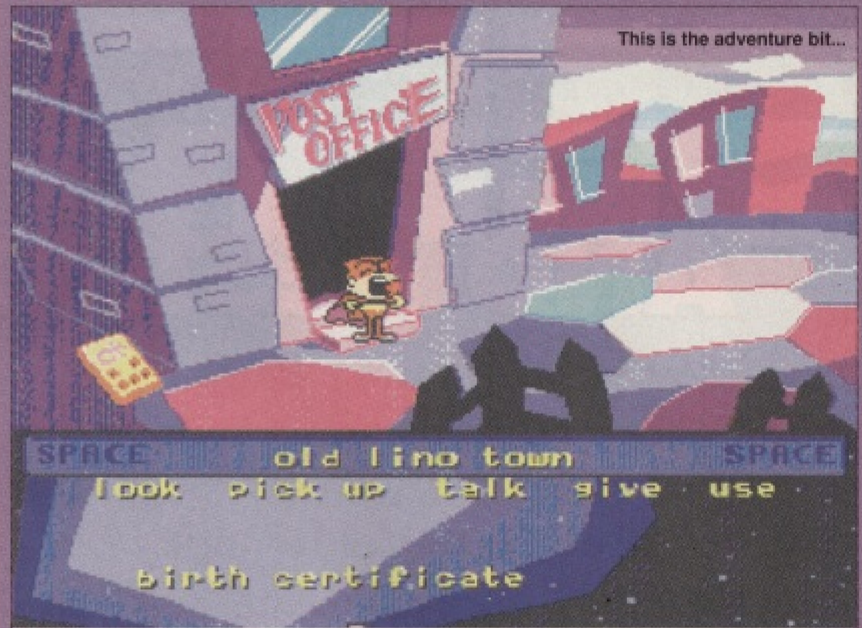
It's funny, sure, and mildly entertaining for a while, but without the mind taxing challenge of something like *Beneath A Steel Sky*, it just pales and ends up as a second rate adventure. A shame really, especially when you consider that Coktel Vision are now owned by Sierra.

Tony Dillon

53%



Some of the most obvious uses for some objects turn out to be red herrings, such as this golf ball and club.



This is the adventure bit...

COSMIC SPACEHEAD

CODEMASTERS OUT NOW £25.99

Sounds like a new kind of drug user doesn't it? Paul Presley should be on safe ground then. Hold on. *Cosmic Spacehead* is nothing to do with narcotics of any kind, although to come up with the idea of combining a LucasArts style adventure (except without any of the playability) with a number of arcade-style sub games, you'd have to be on something. I'd hazard a guess at an IV drip filled with coffee.

This game's storyline of an intergalactic tourist trying to prove Earth's existence is told in the main by a rather unfriendly point 'n' click adventure (all run, rather curiously by a joystick rather than a mouse – the mind boggles), calling on arcade style platform games to link the various screens together.

Does it work? Can the concept of two totally dissimilar games working hand in hand be a successful one? Can a brick whistle the first two lines of Nessun Dorma? Of course it doesn't work. There's no feeling of cohesion between the two factions, no sense of attachment. It is as if they were just put together because they could be.

At no time does the act of jumping from precarious platform to precarious platform influence the overall story in any way and it is the single most frustrating thing in the world to have spent the past half hour going through the adventure motions only to lose all your work because your reflex skills aren't up to the job. This is why arcade games in adventures are always


... and this is the arcade bit. Nuff said.

very simple affairs. The audiences are different and don't need some sort of bridge to come together.

Of course it wouldn't have been so bad if the adventure side had been up to much but here too we just see a tired attempt to mirror someone else's format. The lack of mouse control is simply pure laziness on the part of the programmers and the actual puzzles are woefully simple.

You might say that it was aimed towards the younger element of the gamesplaying public, but since we all know that the younger element are far more likely to want to play *Street Fighter II*, that argument barely holds water.

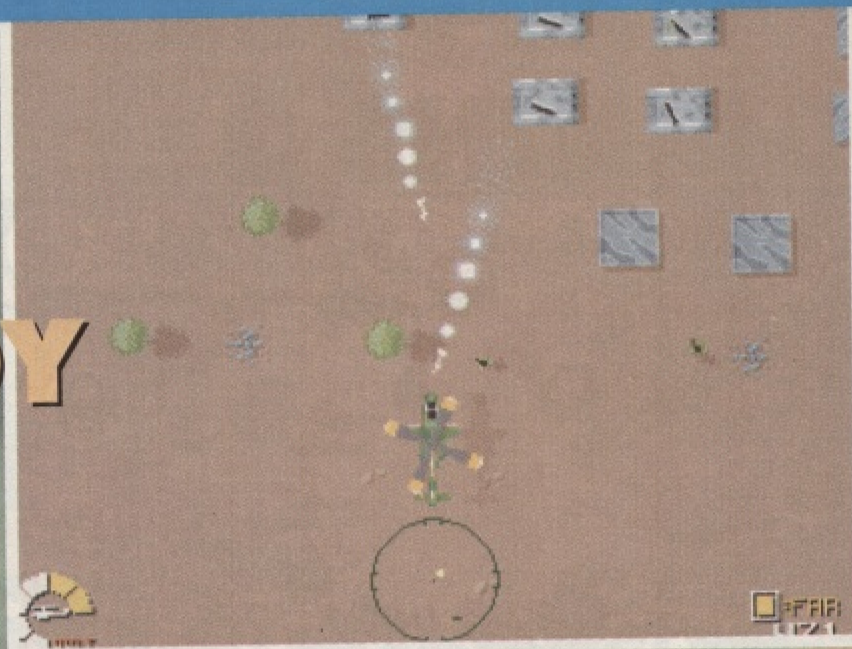
In fact the whole product is as leaky as a sieve with too many holes in it. Best to let it just wash right away.

Paul Presley

59%

SEEK AND DESTROY

"You spin me right round, baby, right round". Tony Dillon's all in a spin, thanks to Vision Software's new blaster that takes rotational control and turns it on its head.



The enemy has some mean hardware of its own to sling at you.

There's always been something about helicopter games that captures gamers' imaginations. Just think back to games like *Thunderhawk* and *Desert Strike* to see how the public just love the destructive powers of Da Vinci's flying machine. New Zealand's Vision Software, those of Woody's World fame and long time *Blitz Basic* campaigners, realise this too, and have spent the best part of the last year pulling together their own answer to *Desert Strike*.

Like most games of this type, you have to fly your chopper out on a series of missions across a variety of terrains, blasting airborne and ground-based targets with a single aim in mind, usually to eliminate a certain number of opposing units, destroy a particular building or rescue some hostages. All in a day's work, really.

The whole thing is viewed from above, with your chopper holding a slightly below centre position on the screen. A scanner below you shows the positions of all the enemies in range, and small readouts dotted around the screen show the state of your fuel and shields, along with the currently selected weapon. It's an extremely uncluttered display, and with the speed of this game, it needs to be.

Each mission is played out over an enormous map, yet the screen only scrolls upwards. In a similar style to *Bob's Bad Day*, the entire screen rotates around your helicopter when you push left or right on the joystick, which while being a fair bit more disorientating than, say, Team 17's *Overdrive*, certainly looks a lot more impressive.

Oddly enough, once you've got used to the whole world whirling around you every time you touch the joystick, it actually becomes extremely playable.

What helicopter game would be complete without a wide variety of weapons? *Seek And Destroy* gives you six different weapon systems to play with, from the basic chain gun, to more advanced weapons such as FFAR (Folding Fin Aerial Rockets), Air-to-Ground and Air-to-Air homing missiles. More unusual weapons are the air strike, where you can call a fleet of bombers to an area to completely annihilate it, or Napalm bombs, ideal for wiping out long lines of enemy tanks.



Your chopper is armed with a surprising amount of destructive hardware.

If six weapons seems like a lot of hard work for one person, then you can stick the game in two player mode, where player one flies the chopper and player two takes over the weapons. A strange way to have a two player arcade game, perhaps, but it works well enough.

Visually, the game looks a little sparse at first. That is, until you take a good look at what it is actually doing. Obviously it's rotating a whole load of objects around a point, using a sequence of pre-rotated sprites to give a convincing image, but one thing that isn't immediately apparent is that it is also rotating and placing the shadows for everything on the screen. The light comes from one direction constantly, and the shadows move in relation to your helicopter to represent that. It might not look great on a still screen, but it's extremely effective when moving.

Seek And Destroy is a very easy game to get to grips with, but in time honoured fashion it will take you quite a while to really conquer. Very playable and very addictive indeed, this fast paced blaster shows that there's more to New Zealand than breeding sheep. A hell of a lot more.

There are plenty of enemy helicopters to keep you on your toes.



SAMPLING SUPREMO

One of the most impressive things about *Seek And Destroy*, other than the fact that it's a particularly fine Metallica song, is the use of samples within the game. Along with all the usual chuggs and flapping sounds from a helicopter game, there is plenty of speech from your imaginary New Zealand co-pilot. Collect some fuel when you're running low, and he'll chip in with "Just in time!", or go a bit berserk on the killing front, and he'll utter "Overkill". My personal favourite is the point where you lose all your lives. The screen goes black, and a voice over the radio starts panicking when you don't respond to his radio messages. Classy stuff.

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RELEASE DATE:	JAN 94
GENRE:	SHOOT 'EM UP
TEAM:	VISION
CONTROLS:	MOUSE, JOYSTICK
NUMBER OF DISKS:	4
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	2
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	82%
SOUND	84%
LASTABILITY	85%
PLAYABILITY	84%

"An excellent and original shoot em up."

OVERALL 83%

JURASSIC PARK



The scariest thing about Jurassic Parkmania is that we've still got the video to come. In the meantime, content yourselves with the myriad money-making items of merchandise and a surprisingly good game from Ocean.


At the start, you need to find the kids.

Ocean have taken some liberties with the plot. The film's hero, Dr. Alan Grant, is now the only human left in the park and the dinosaurs are hungry. But Grant isn't the kind of hero to tell the world to 'go hang' and save his own backside. Rather than do what most of us (certainly me) would do, which is to run really fast to the docks, get into a boat and sail for home, he's taken on the awesome responsibility of rescuing the remaining humans, then making sure the dinosaurs stay put on their island and don't decide to holiday on mainland South America.

The mission brief is simple. Grant has to first track down Tim and Lex, the grandchildren of park owner John Hammond, who are holed up with several other people in the visitor centre. If he makes it he's then got to reactivate the park's security systems and finally summon a helicopter to get them off the island. The spanner in the works comes in the shape of a pack of two ton lizards called velociraptors. These hungry dinosaurs have a newly discovered taste for human flesh and would much rather Grant and Co. hang around the island for a while.

A DAY IN THE PARK

Ocean are famous for spending loads of cash on top film licenses and turning them into standard platform games. Something's gone very wrong here though, as *Jurassic Park* is original, good to look at, excellent to play and varied throughout.

It's a mixture of two distinct styles. First there's the top-down view stages where Grant has to be steered out of the path of the marauding dinosaurs while trying to track the objects he needs to save everyone from becoming the velociraptors' next meal. I wasn't very taken with this bit of the game at first, after all, it's running on a 32-bit machine so I was expecting something a bit special. However, it plays a lot better than it looks and the dinosaurs are very well animated, although you don't get to see much of them as you sprint for cover. The aim here is to activate and deactivate bits of the park's electric fence so you can find your way through to the children, preferably with all limbs

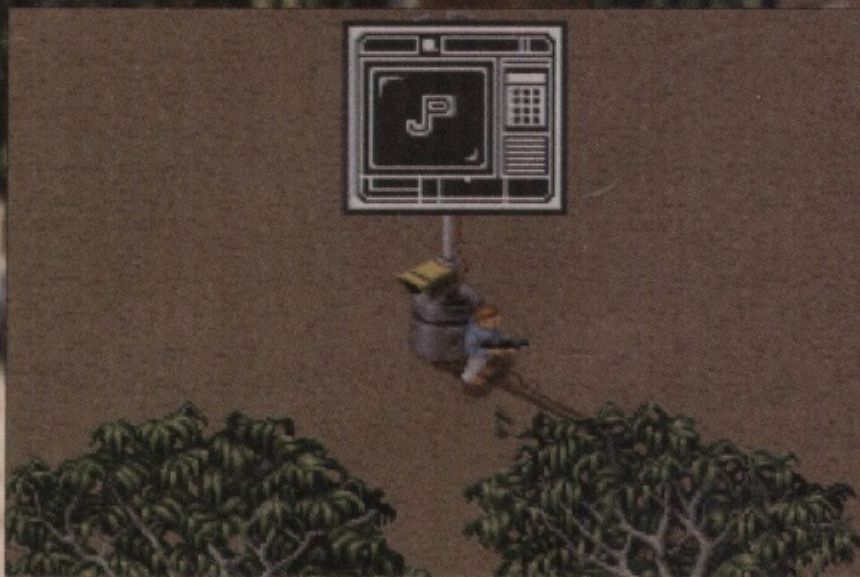

You 'll find a lot of interesting items in these bunkers.

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE FARM...

Jurassic Park, the computer game, now comes in three distinct styles. First is the excellent Amiga version, which is the same on the SNES, NES and PC. For the Mega Drive version, though, Sega's developers had obviously taken some kind of talent-inhibiting concoction as all they were capable of producing was a rather staid platform games (surprise, surprise).

They have made an effort with the Mega-CD version, though, plumping for the multi-media option. Using specially-filmed footage you get to roam around the park looking at it in first person perspective and calling up information files on its various inhabitants. Unfortunately, this novel approach hasn't worked and the game's a bit of a duffer really.





Above: the motion trackers keep tabs on the dinosaurs in the park.

intact. Once you've found the sproglings you've got to guide them to safety before heading back into the thick of it to complete the job.

Grant isn't totally helpless. Human ingenuity has given him a slight advantage over the dinosaurs as he can arm himself with a variety of weapons including stun guns and dart rifles. As well as guns there are plenty of other pick-ups such as keys and ammunition which are used automatically when you need them, so there's no scrabbling around an inventory screen looking for a bigger gun while a pack of hungry 'raptors close in on you.

FREE DEE

The game really takes off when you enter a building though. Here the top-view is replaced with some amazing 3D graphics, dinosaurs being especially outstanding as they charge down the corridor towards you at the first sniff of lunch. One of the aims in the 3D stages is to get the park's generator running again, which will give Grant's chums in the visitor's centre something to smile about. The smoothly-scrolling backgrounds aren't as detailed as they could have been considering the game is on the 1200, but the dinosaur graphics more than compensate. The scaling as they come towards you is pixel-perfect with no nasty blockiness to spoil the atmosphere.

I have to admit to be genuinely gobsmacked by *Jurassic Park*. It's hardly state-of-the-art stuff, but it's nice to see companies like Ocean bothering to put a bit of time and effort into their products. *Jurassic Park* is nice to look at, and great to play. I found the 3D sections to be especially nerve-wracking after a late night working and plying my tortured body with ultra-espresso coffee. It really is hold-onto-your-pants time when a velociraptor leaps round a corner just as you come towards the end of a stage.

Well done Ocean, you've restored my faith in movie licenses!

The tazer is just one of the weapons in the game.

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RELEASE DATE:	JANUARY
GENRE:	ACTION/ADVENTURE
TEAM:	IN HOUSE
CONTROLS:	JOYSTICK
NUMBER OF DISKS:	3
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	88%
SOUND	82%
LASTABILITY	88%
PLAYABILITY	87%

"An excellent, well designed movie tie-in."

OVERALL 87%



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Spot the *Chase HQ* style arrows above some of the cars. This tells you who is the most important person to overtake.

If you're looking around the screenshots on this side of the page and wondering why this game looks a little familiar, that's only because it has been seen before, under the name of *Crazy Cars 3*. Yes, Titus' gem of a racing game has been slightly touched up and renamed to boost what were originally seriously flagging sales, brought about by poor distribution and the closure of Palace Software – the publishing house originally responsible for distributing Titus' product.

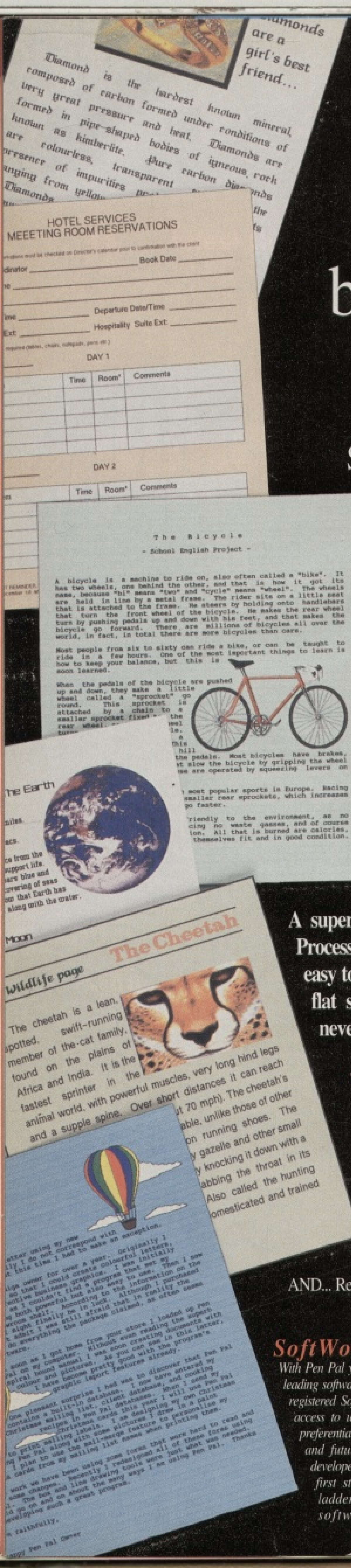
The license has been bought, the game badged and re-released, now it's probably time to refresh your memories. The game is based around a series of completely illegal high-speed races across the highways of the US (remember *The Great American Road Race*?) against a bunch of unsavoury types. Each race costs money to enter, but you make that money back by gambling before each race. Your three main competitors and yourself gather round a table and bet amounts on yourself to win. Come through, and the pot is yours.

As a racing game, it's quite good. Fairly responsive, although the car does skid around a little too much for my liking, the game borrows a lot of good elements from a number of other games. It has the varied scenery and weather of *Lotus 2*, along with the interfering police of *Chase HQ* and the car upgrades of, well, just about anything really. This time around a two player option has been included, which makes everything far more enjoyable, and the whole thing adds up to the most competent and enjoyable game that Titus have ever produced, and a game well worth having. It might not be as smooth as *Lotus*, as fast as F1 or as playable as *Jaguar*, but it's still a cool game.

Tony Dillon **88%**



This map of the US shows you which of the states you can currently afford to race in.



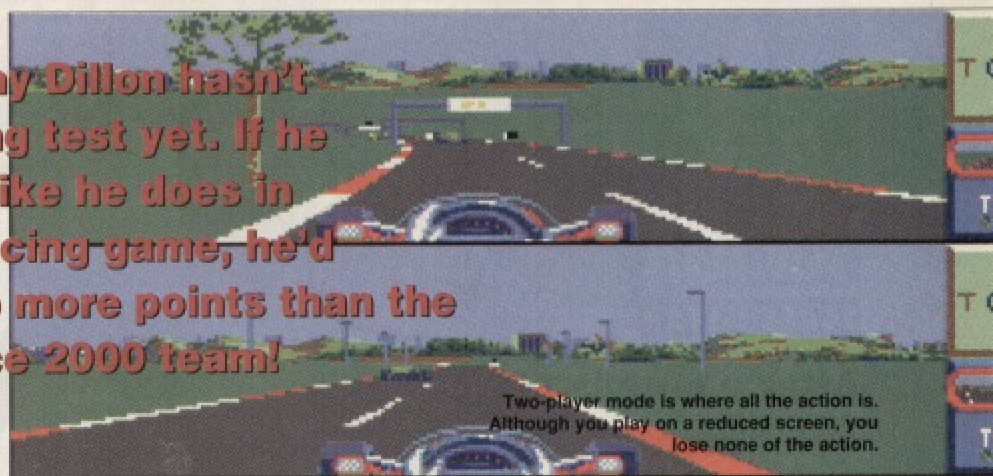
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F1

Lucky for us, Tony Dillon hasn't passed his driving test yet. If he drives anything like he does in Domark's new racing game, he'd probably rack up more points than the entire Death Race 2000 team!



Two-player mode is where all the action is. Although you play on a reduced screen, you lose none of the action.

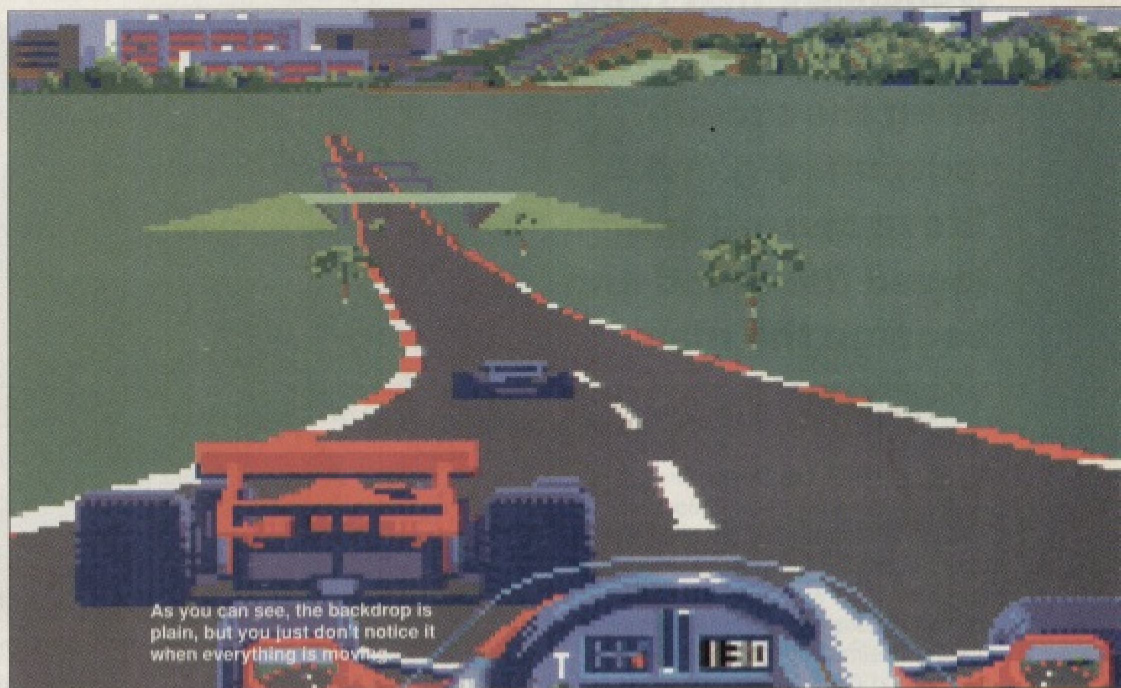
I've been a fan of racing games since I loaded up *Chequered Flag* on my trusty ZX Spectrum almost ten years ago! Recently, we've been a little dry of third-person perspective games (with the exception of *F17 Challenge*), instead being flooded with top-down racers. Not to worry, though, as Domark have come to the rescue with *F1*, Lankhor's extension to the *Vroom* series of games.

You see, *F1* has been released before, albeit without all the flashy 'Official' badging. It was released in France, two years ago, under the name of *Vroom Multiplayer*. If you remember *Vroom*, you'll know that it was a simple but stylish race over a selection of courses that leaned away from realism and more toward sheer 'seat of your pants' driving. It was a phenomenal success, but it was constantly mourned for its lack of a two-player option. This is where *Multiplayer* came in, but for some reason was never released in the UK. So when Domark needed a game to tie in with their official *F1* license, all they had to do was buy up the rights to *Multiplayer*, give it a fresh lick of paint and design some new courses.

Playing *F1* is almost exactly the same as playing *Vroom*. It's still fast, it's still wildly unrealistic and it's still the smoothest racer around. Looking at the screenshots, you might think it looks a little sparse. That's only because Lankhor threw roadside detail out of the window in favour of speed, so although there isn't much roadside detail on the screens, you don't really notice because it isn't there for long anyway.

As you have probably guessed by now, speed is what makes *F1* such a playable game. With a blend of polygons and sprites it looks the business, but running it on a faster machine and the game comes into its own. It is so fast and so smooth on the A1200 that you are given the option to slow down the update, making the game run at the same speed as the A500!

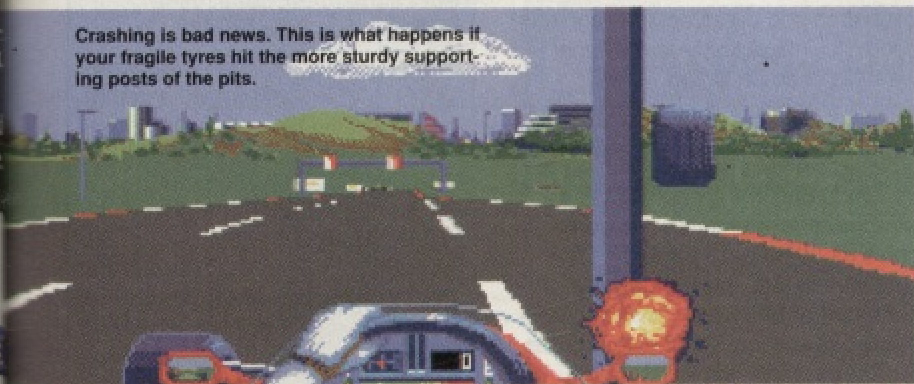
But any driving game soon becomes dull when you can win on all the courses. Computer drivers soon become predictable and the game loses its edge. Unless it's a two-player game, though. Ever since *Pitstop 2* was released on the C64, publishers have strived to create the perfect two-player driving game and it looks like *F1* could be the one. The screen is split horizontally, with each player taking up half the screen, as usual, with no loss of speed. There's nothing like racing against someone of similar skill, screaming 'round corners while screaming at each other. I'd go as far to say that if you have ready access to two joysticks and a large group of friends, then this is a game you should not miss. If you're going to be playing it alone most of the time, then it's worth getting, but nowhere near as addictive. Of course, the question still remains as to whether or not you should buy it if you already have *Vroom*. It's a tough one. There's the big difference in that it's a two-player simultaneous game, which always ups the playability stakes of any game, and is a welcome addition to *Vroom*. On top of that, there's the championship league, a host of new tracks and a slight speed increase. Whether or not that's enough to make you rush out and buy it is down to you. CU



As you can see, the backdrop is plain, but you just don't notice it when everything is moving.

PITSTOP 3?

One of the most charming and, indeed, one of the irritating points about *Pitstop 2* was the pitstop itself. Pulling into the pitstop lane and breaking brought up a screen showing a top view of the car and two mechanics, which changed tyres and filled the tank under direct joystick control. *F1* pitstops are almost as charming, with similar little men running out and doing repairs in real time, but you don't get to control them directly. Instead you press a key and the respective task is carried out. Somehow it just isn't the same...



Crashing is bad news. This is what happens if your fragile tyres hit the more sturdy supporting posts of the pits.

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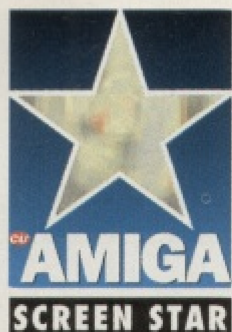
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RELEASE DATE:	OUT NOW
GENRE:	ARCADE RACER
TEAM:	LANKHOR
CONTROLS:	JOYSTICK, MOUSE
NUMBER OF DISKS:	1
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1/2
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	83%
SOUND	71%
LASTABILITY	81%
PLAYABILITY	86%

"A superb two-player game, but pales a little when going solo."

OVERALL 84%

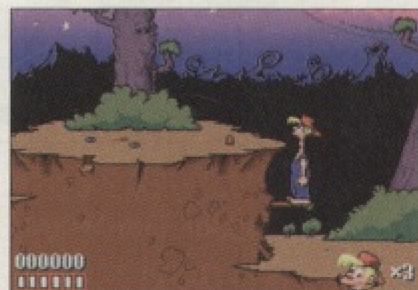


BUBBA 'N' STIX

After a couple of quiet months, it transpires that Core have been rediscovering the arcade /adventure game. Steve Merrett followed their lead and became the man with the stick...

When Core Design first decided to go it alone, their original intention was to enhance existing genres. This they managed with the likes of *Torvak* (Rastan Saga and its many mates), *Heimdall* (Knight Lore and its kin) and *Corporation* (any 3Der you care to mention). But after a while something new beckoned – the arcade/adventure game. Now, call me an old fart if you will, but I grew up with the likes of *Pyjamarama* and *Jet Set Willy* on the good old Spectrum. At the time of their release, which was admittedly in the middle of 1984, these were ground-breaking titles which created a new genre in itself; and one which ever since has been my favourite. Yes indeed, if one game style is going to win me over it's going to be the one which combines platform antics with a slight element of puzzling but Core have gone and lifted my expectations even further. Yessiree, *Bubba'n' Stix* is the Jean-Luc Picard Next Generation equivalent of the arcade/adventure as it takes the basic puzzling theme one logical step further. You see, whereas countless other arcade/adventures tread the same route: i.e. the player finds a useful object which is then taken to an obvious place where it is needed – *Bubba'n' Stix* requires genuine thought on the player's part - along with the requisite platform skills.


Believe it or not, this is actually the map of the entire game. The arrow is your current location.



Bubba uses Stix as a ladder.

According to the game's convoluted scenario, an inter-galactic big game hunter has been busy procuring a huge menagerie of alien beings for a zoo. A hapless handyman by the name of Bubba has become the Earth exhibit, but kicked up such a stink that the various inhabitants went into revolt and caused the ship they were held on to crash. Enlisting the help of a stick-like critter called, funnily enough, Stix, Bubba and his new-found ally are left to explore five scrolling stages in search of a way to get home. Yup, using Bubba's assorted jumping and running skills and Stix's... er, various stick abilities, a number of problems stand between our unlikely pair as they battle all manner of strange aliens. Nothing new but Core have a few surprises up their sleeves to keep you on your toes.



With a little effort, Bubba will lever this rock into a gap off screen.

GIVE IT SOME STICK

Starting in a forest world, Bubba and Stix begin to explore the eight-way-scrolling play area. Via the joystick, Bubba is made to walk and jump, whilst assorted combinations of the fire button and the directional controls bring Stix into action – and what a versatile chap he is, too. Whilst Bubba is particularly adept at jumping and the like, Stix can be wedged into holes to create a useful platform, thrown at oncoming enemies as a weapon, or even stuffed into someone's mouth to get it through customs! In fact, it is the unlikely character of Stix which goes to create many of the game's stunning puzzles.

The problem with past Amiga arcade/adventures is that they either rely on the player's platforming skills or lean towards the RPG genre with oh-too-hard puzzles. *Bubba'n' Stix*, however, strikes a perfect balance. The forest level eases the player into its many intricacies (throwing the stick, etc), whilst the later volcanic and maze-based locations add new ideas to the proceedings. For instance, having got used to the idea of lobbing the stick at foes, next the player is given massive clues that wedging the stick into handy knot holes creates a platform and so on. In fact, so versatile does the stick become that later its use becomes second nature; a good sign of any arcade/adventure.

Every aspect of *Bubba 'n' Stix* shows that Core have obviously invested a great deal of time into its development. It really is a logical advancement over the many arcade/adventures on the market and, in terms of appearance, it scores much higher than the likes of The Addams Family and its ilk. Basically, Core have created a game which links between 'old style' puzzlers such as *Monkey Island* and platformers such as *Zool*, creating a game necessitating both skill and thought on the player's part. In these days of platform-based console epics, the Amiga needs a new string to its bow and *Bubba'n' Stix* is the perfect weapon. It's playable, long lasting and looks the biz. What more could you want? Give it a whirl... CU

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RELEASE DATE:	OUT NOW
GENRE:	ARCADE/ADVENTURE
TEAM:	IN HOUSE
CONTROLS:	JOYSTICK
NUMBER OF DISKS:	2
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	0.5 Mb

GRAPHICS	91%
SOUND	82%
LASTABILITY	88%
PLAYABILITY	93%

"Takes the arcade/adventure game into the next dimension..."

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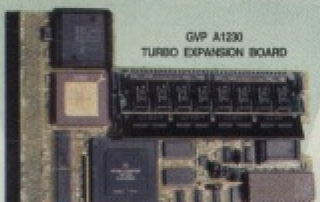
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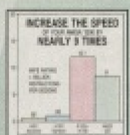


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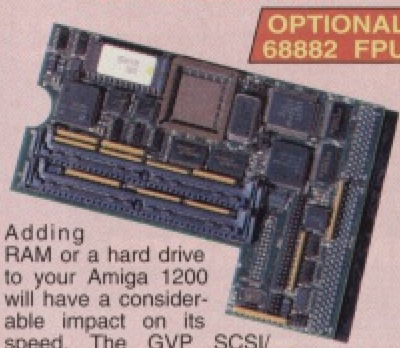
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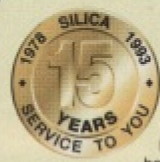
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The caped crusader returns to face his greatest enemies yet – Crap Programmerman, Sad Designgeezer and all their nasty henchmen. Unfortunately, this time the script's been rewritten and not even the Dark Knight can pull this one out of the fire.

BATMAN RETURNS



Based very loosely around the second Batman movie, Bruce Wayne's superhero alter-ego is once again out to protect Gotham City. This time, it's the Penguin's army of killer clowns who threaten to take control. Although why they'd choose a scum-ridden hell-hole over, say, one of the Hawaiian islands isn't explained. The only thing standing in their way is Batman.

This game neglects the film's plot and action, offering very little instead. The result is a beat 'em up with the creative drive of a stale kipper and a stench to match. Batman faces off against killer clowns and motorbike maniacs in a variety of locations, all of which are badly drawn and have absolutely no effect on the gameplay. Occasionally, there's a platform to leap onto, although there's not much point to this as the bad guys just follow you up and kick you off.

As the game progresses, you find yourself up against more than paper karate experts. This mobster fires shells faster than you can move.

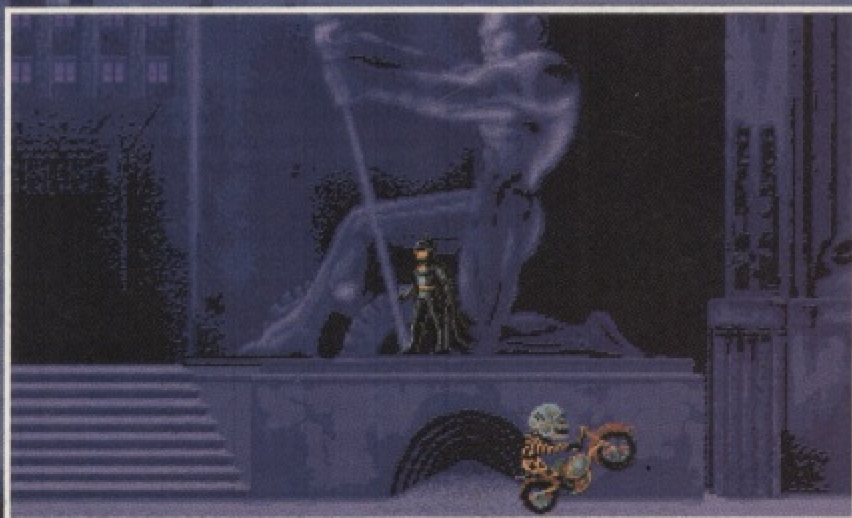
KNIGHT MOVES

Batman moves like an arthritic pensioner on a cold day. Presumably Bruce Wayne was busy and Alfred had to take over the action. The combat moves are simply dreadful, making Jon Pertwee's Venusian Aikido in Dr Who look like something that would have Bruce Lee running scared. He is limited to one punch and three types of kick, although only one, the flying kick, is needed to defeat most foes.

For defence he can roll out of trouble if you pull down and in a direction on the joystick, but most of the time he just slides along the ground looking like an ice skater with back trouble.

Aware of fighting inabilities, Batman's kitted himself out with some neat bat-gadgets which make crimefighting a whole lot easier. These include a deadly batarang, which doesn't return to Batman when he throws it, the batdisk which dismounts motorcyclists and a bat-rope which pulls enemies into punch range. Each one only has a limited number of uses and when they run out you have to wait for a few minutes before replacements appear.

You need the batdisk to get rid of these bikers, unfortunately you don't have one at them at the moment so you'd better avoid them instead.



WIRED

The action, to use the word in its broadest sense, borders on the hilarious. When a character jumps he flies around the screen like he is supported by wires. When you've defeated two waves of enemies the screen scrolls on and the whole thing happens over again. The only variation comes from the boss characters, such as Catwoman, who are so tough you might as well forget about getting any further in the game and switch the machine off. The biggest crime has to be the character graphics, though. We live in the age of AGA chipsets and 256-colour sprites, yet Batman's graphics consist of the tiniest, blockiest, worst animated sprites I've seen in a long time. The collision detection is unpredictable to say the least, sometimes you can flatten an enemy without making contact, other times you kick right through them. The same also applies to them, so you're often left wondering just what happened as


Here Batman takes a pasting.



Extra weapons drop from the sky when you clear a wave of bad guys. Usually the weapon you get just happens to be the one you need to get past the next boss.

you're kicked off a platform without seeming to make contact with anything. It doesn't stop there, though. You can expect to wait at least a minute between games while your Amiga re-loads the level you just died on. It's also infuriatingly difficult. It's almost impossible to fight without taking several hits, and dying is something that comes very easily, as the game occasionally decides to takes two lives off you in one go. This is utterly frustrating and is definitely the final, six-inch nail in the gameplay coffin.

All this is set over five levels, which culminate in a battle with the Penguin himself. The game's tack changes slightly in the later stages, becoming more platform orientated and consequently even tougher. What I find particularly sad is the game is programmed by Denton Designs, who were responsible for 8-bit classics like *Shadowfire* and *Enigma Force*. I must admit I was expecting a conversion of the PC action/adventure which I played last year. It wasn't brilliant, but at least it looked good and had something to do with the movie.

Whatever way you look at this game, it should never have got off the drawing board. It's without a doubt an oven ready turkey with all the trimmings, including a melted polly-bag full of giblets inside. It would be easier for me to pull a double decker bus out of my bottom than it would be to recommend this game. Don't bother with it. CU

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RELEASE DATE:	OUT NOW
GENRE:	BEAT 'EM UP
TEAM:	DENTON DESIGNS
CONTROLS:	JOYSTICK
NUMBER OF DISKS:	2
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	NO
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	32%
SOUND	67%
LASTABILITY	27%
PLAYABILITY	30%

"Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear, oh dear."

OVERALL 19%

War may be fun to Sensible Software, but Empire take it far more seriously. So, funnily enough, does Paul Presley.



CAMPAIGN II

All the main fighting takes place here.



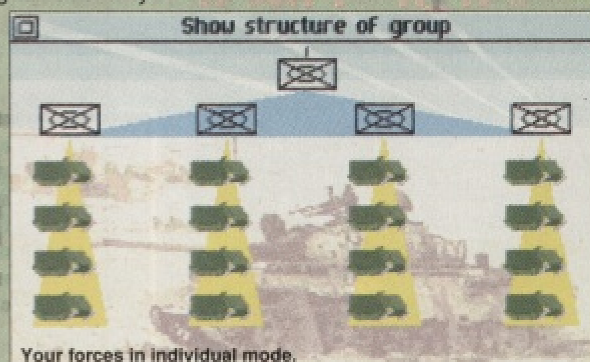
An addition to this sequel is the use of controllable helicopters.

Once wars were noble things. Men were men, you didn't shoot your enemy until you could see the whites of their eyes and everyone knew when one was coming. They made advanced reservations in Poland. Then Vietnam happened and America and Russia decided to make sure they got involved in every armed conflict they could and no one would know about it until they said so (usually a message delivered by several thousand armed troops turning up on your doorstep). Now, with major advances in technology, machines have taken over. You can kill an opponent by pushing a button thousands of miles away. No one sees people any more, only hardware.

And that's where Empire's latest strategy game comes in. *Campaign II* deals with the various military machines that have come into play over the last forty years or so and lets you use them against all-comers. So let me introduce you to the game properly: CU AMIGA reader, this is *Campaign II*. *Campaign II*, this is a CU AMIGA reader. Start mingling.

WHAT TO DO?

Campaign II's main area of expertise is the strategic recreation of any land-based battle you can dream up. Vietnam veterans versus British tanks? You got it. A full air artillery of the second ninth against the best Russia currently has to offer? You got it. Apart from the 3D combat sections (which we'll come to later), it's the campaign editor that grabs the most attention. DIY war simulators have been tried before, with varying degrees of success. *Campaign II*'s raison d'être is that you can choose just about any land-based war machine there is (all of which are neatly laid out according to nationality in one of the game's three manuals), as well as a few helicopters that were thrown in for good measure. Create any kind of scenery, add towns, cities even and go blast things to smithereens. You have a few samples to get you going, a mere twenty or so, fourteen of which are tutorials to the game's mechanics, the other six being based on real life drama. Desert Storm is included, as is Iran vs. Iraq, Yom Kippur, The Six Day War, Korea and Vietnam.



Your forces in individual mode.

ON DISPLAY

The campaign map, the battle map and (wait for it) the 3D view form the main gaming displays. The first is the overall display of your campaign, showing all your forces, the positions of any enemy that are in visible range and the surrounding scenery.

Control is simple enough, perhaps too simple, as it causes you to feel somehow less involved than you should be. The battle map is called into play whenever two opposing forces meet for a spot of one-on-one genocide. Zooming in to the actual combat field, it shows your troops in individual forms at the bottom of the screen and any enemy that can be seen at the top. The whole battle can be run from here should you tire of the 3D action. Waypoints can be set, formation orders issued and reinforcements brought into play.

The 3D section lets you go from an overall look at each skirmish to the front seat of one of the vehicles. This is the main action area of the game and although it can be pretty exciting at times, quite often you find yourself just setting the whole battle to automatic and letting the computer take care of it. It doesn't feel as though it fits with the rest of the game, as though it was stuck on to the end in order to woo the larger section of the gaming audience instead of staying married to the strategists.

Campaign II has been touting its wares as a serious strategy game. Playing the 'arcade' section merely reveals its true colours. It can't seem to decide on which side of the fence it wants to land and as a result comes down right in the middle of it. The definitive tank simulation, *Team Yankee* showed how much thought and strategy goes into tank-based warfare. *Campaign II* reduces the concept to a glorified version of *Battlezone*.



You can, if you want, create your own fights of fancy.

LOOKING GOOD

The only other thing that lets *Campaign II* down is that it is so unattractive to use, – none of it is laid out very nicely. It's never immediately apparent which switch does what and the menus (or toolbars) look as if they were just thrown together at the last minute. The result is off-putting and gives the product a very cold feeling. On the question of recommen- dation, I guess I would urge you to look beyond the flaws. If you treat it as an introduction to the noble art of warfare then *Campaign II* can be highly playable. One can but hope for a third in the series, with perhaps someone other than David Braben influencing the graphics and style and with someone like Norman Schwarzkopf influencing the strategic element. We deserve it and so does *Campaign*. CU

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RELEASE DATE:	OUT NOW
GENRE:	STRATEGY
TEAM:	JONATHAN GRIFFITHS
CONTROLS:	MOUSE, KEYBOARD
NUMBER OF DISKS:	2
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	YES
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	75%
SOUND	70%
LASTABILITY	81%
PLAYABILITY	79%

'Unfriendly, but potentially absorbing.'

OVERALL 81%

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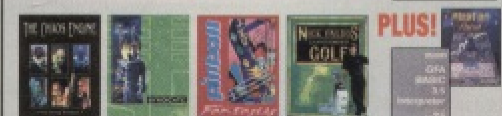
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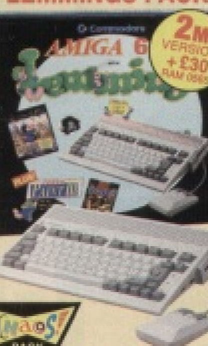
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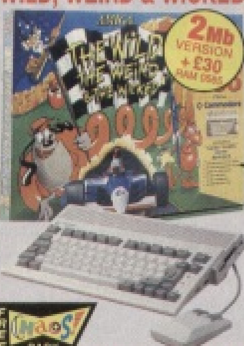
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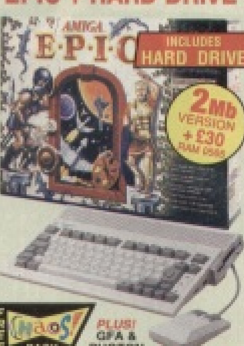
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- PCMCIA Smart Card Slot
- 96 Key Keyboard with Numeric Keypad
- 2½" Internal IDE Hard Drive Options
- 1 Year On-site Warranty

HARD DRIVE OPTIONS
- Approved 2.5" Hard Drives
- Fitted correctly below metal safety shield - does not invalidate warranty
- Covered by Commodore's Official 1 Year On-Site Warranty
- Look for Special 'Official Upgrade' sticker

AMIGA 1500 — HOME ACCOUNTS



FREE CHAOS PACK — PLUS! GFA & PHOTON — FULLY EXPANDABLE

FREE DELIVERY

1 YEAR RETURN TO SILICA WARRANTY

PACK INCLUDES:
- 1Mb AMIGA 1500 ... £699.99
- 2 x 3½" BUILT-IN 1Mb FLOPPY DRIVES ... –
- EXPANSION SLOTS ... –
- PC COMPATIBILITY ... –
- VIDEO SLOT ... – For enhanced graphics
- PC-XT BRIDGEBOARD SUPPLIED ... £100.00
- PLATINUM WORKS SOFTWARE ... £169.95 Word processor, database, spreadsheet
- PUZZNIC ... £24.99
- TOKI ... £24.99
- ELF ... £24.99
- HOME ACCOUNTS ... £29.99
- DELUXE PAINT III ... £79.99

FREE FROM SILICA (See Top Left) ... £265.91

TOTAL PACK VALUE: £1420.80
LESS PACK SAVING: £1021.80
SILICA PRICE: £399.00

1Mb RAM — RRP ~~£899.97~~ **£399** INC VAT - AMB 1500

AMIGA 4000 — SPECIFICATIONS



FREE CHAOS PACK

1 YEAR ON SITE/AT HOME WARRANTY ON ALL CONFIGURATIONS

FREE DELIVERY

MIPS RATING - Million Instructions Per Second

Model	MIPS
A600	0.87
A1200	1.42
A4000-030	8.0
A4000-040	18.7

The A4000 runs at up to **21** times the speed of the A600.

GRAPHICS:
- 16.7 MILLION COLOURS
- RESOLUTIONS UP TO 1280x512 and 800x600

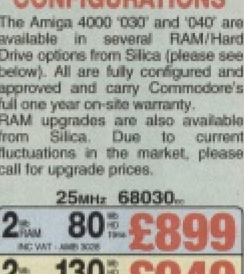
OPEN ARCHITECTURE:
The A4000 has been designed for maximum flexibility providing plenty of room for memory & peripheral expansion.
- 4x16/32-BIT ZORRO III SLOTS
- 3xPC-AT SLOTS
- 1x24-bit VIDEO SLOT

POWER:
- 1.76Mb 3½" FLOPPY DRIVE

NEW! AA CHIPSET

AMIGA 4000 — CONFIGURATIONS

The Amiga 4000 '030' and '040' are available in several RAM/Hard Drive options from Silica (please see below). All are fully configured and approved and carry Commodore's full one year on-site warranty. RAM upgrades are also available from Silica. Due to current fluctuations in the market, please call for upgrade prices.



25MHz 68030

RAM	HD	Price
2Mb	80Mb	£899
2Mb	130Mb	£949
4Mb	80Mb	£999
4Mb	130Mb	£1049
4Mb	214Mb	£1149
4Mb	340Mb	£1249
4Mb	540Mb	£1499

25MHz 68040

RAM	HD	Price
6Mb	130Mb	£1899
6Mb	214Mb	£1999
6Mb	340Mb	£2149
6Mb	525Mb	£2399

RAM UPGRADES CALL FOR PRICES

CDTV ADD-ON FOR A500 or A500PLUS



A570 UPGRADE

FREE FROM SILICA:
- **Hutchinsons Encyclopedia CD** RRP £29.99 — A fascinating and unique reference tool comprising the complete Hutchinsons Encyclopedia.
- **CDPD - 600 Public Domain Titles** RRP £19.99 — Over 600Mb of Public Domain software and shareware. Includes word processors, data bases and spreadsheets etc., games and utilities.

WORTH OVER £49

This Compact Disc-playing add-on simply clips to the side expansion port of your Amiga 500 and is immediately ready to deliver its power.
- Enables your Amiga 500 to run CDTV software
- Plays normal audio CD discs
- Storage capacity equal to 600 floppy disks
- Transfer time 153Kb/second
- Compatible with CD + G and CD + MIDI formats
- Compatible with ISO9660 standard
- Some old A500s need modification - call for details

WINNER OF THE AMIGA GOLD AWARD 91%

NEW LOW PRICE CDTV — RRP ~~£349.99~~ **£99** INC VAT - CCD 0570

CDTV SOFTWARE



LEMMINGS — These suicidal critters aren't about to take up sunbathing, take on the ingeniously designed puzzles to ensure they survive to tell their descendants the tale. Ref: CSL 4281 **£9.99** INC VAT

SIM CITY — As the mayor of Sim City you take control of the police, fire and transport departments. You must challenge crime, survive dreadful weather and aircraft disasters. Ref: CSS 4921 **£9.99** INC VAT

SUPER GAMES PACK — This ultra high action compilation is sure to raise your adrenalin level. Includes Jailbreak, Byteman, Deathbolt and Lunar Rescue. Ref: CSS 6971 **£9.99** INC VAT

FOR OUR COMPLETE RANGE OF CDTV TITLES PLEASE CALL OUR MAIL ORDER HOTLINE OR VISIT ONE OF OUR SHOWROOMS LISTED BELOW.

APPROVED

Silica are a fully authorised Amiga dealer. We can upgrade Amiga 600 or 1200's with hard drives, for new or existing owners, without affecting Commodore's official on site warranty. We offer other upgrades and repair service for A500 and A500PLUS computers.

UPGRADES & REPAIRS
- *Latest test equipment*
- *20 trained technicians*
- *1,000s of parts in stock*
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CALL FOR A PRICE LIST

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031193 - 11.30

Before you decide when to buy your new Amiga computer, we suggest you think very carefully about WHERE you buy it. Consider what it will be like a few months after buying your Amiga, when you may require additional peripherals or software, or help and advice. And, will the company you buy from contact you with details of new products? At Silica, we ensure that you will have nothing to worry about. With our unrivalled experience and expertise, we can meet our customers' requirements with an understanding which is second to none. Complete and return the coupon now for our latest FREE literature and begin to experience the "Silica Service".

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- ***TECHNICAL SUPPORT HELPLINE:*** A team of Amiga technical experts will be at your service.
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- ***ESTABLISHED 15 YEARS:*** We have a proven track record in professional computer sales.
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CROYDON SHOP: Opening Hours: Mon-Sat 9.00am-6.00pm	Debenhams (2nd Floor), 11-31 North End, Croydon, Surrey, CR9 1RQ — Late Night: Thursday - 9pm	**Tel: 081-688 4455** Fax No: 081-686 4658
LONDON SHOP: Opening Hours: Mon-Sat 9.30am-6.00pm	52 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1P 0BA — No Late Night Opening	**Tel: 071-580 4000** Fax No: 071-323 4737
LONDON SHOP: Opening Hours: Mon-Sat 9.30am-7.00pm	Selfridges (Basement Arena), Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB — Late Night: Thursday - 8pm	**Tel: 071-629 1234** Extension: 3914
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ESSEX SHOP: Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9.30am-5.30pm (Sat 9.00am-6.00pm)	Keddies (2nd Floor), High Street, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 1LA — Late Night: Thursday - 7pm	**Tel: 0702 468039** Fax No: 0702 468039
IPSWICH SHOP: Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9.30am-5.30pm (Sat 9.00am-6.00pm)	Debenhams (2nd Floor), Waterloo House, Westgate St, Ipswich, IP1 3EH — Late Night: Thursday - 8pm	**Tel: 0473 287092** Fax No: 0473 287092

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PLEASE SEND A 64 PAGE AMIGA COLOUR CATALOGUE

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms: .... Initials: .... Surname: ....

Company Name (if applicable): ....

Address: ....

....

.... Postcode: ....

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Which computer(s), if any, do you own? 104S

E&OE - Advertised prices and specifications may change - Please return the coupon for the latest information.

CALLERS WELCOME AT OUR BRANCHES OPEN 9-5.30, MONDAY TO SATURDAY, (10-4.30PM SUNDAYS + DECEMBER LATE NIGHT THURSDAYS TO 8.00PM ST ALBANS ONLY)

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WARNING

Due to the exchange rate, or manufacturer's changes or due to current RAM shortage, some prices may alter, either up or down, during the several weeks between going to press and the end of the month of issue. We would ask that prices be confirmed by telephone before ordering.

OLD AMIGA TRADE-IN*

The best trade-in allowance, extra for peripherals and accessories. Trade in your old machine for a brand new A600/1200/4000/CD32 or even a PC.

After trade-in, equipment is checked and refurbished by our engineers and is then offered at bargain prices, complete with 3 months warranty.

A500s FROM £139
A1500s FROM £199

A600 SD/HD..........from 159
A3000s..................from 499
CDTV.............................179
A590 20/40MB....129/159
HDs + Controllers...from 179
GVP HD8 40/52......209/229
XT/AT BBoard..............50/91

OTHER ACCESSORIES - PLEASE ASK.
*Acceptance of pre-V2 machines may be limited

A500/600/CDTV

STARTER PACK
A Must for new users!
Microswitched joystick, "Get the Most from your Amiga" book, 10 Blank discs, 80 capacity lockable disc box, mouse mat, dust cover, Virus Killer.

A500+ and A600s come complete with mouse, modulator to connect to TV, or monitor lead as required, all cables, manuals, operating discs and utilities

REFURBISHED UNITS ONLY AVAILABLE

	INCLUDED AS STANDARD	ALONE £	PLUS STARTER £	WARRANTY	EXTRAS
A500+ 1MB	-	179.99	194.99	12 months return to base	Extra 1MB £25
A500+ CARTOON CLASSICS	Captain Planet, Lemmings, The Simpsons, DPaint III*	194.99	209.99		
A600 SD 1MB	-	174.90	189.90		Extra 1MB £35 • 2Mb PCMCIA £109 • 4MB PCMCIA £169 • Romsharer £45
A600 SD WILD, WEIRD AND WICKED	Silly putty, F1 Grand Prix, Pushover, Deluxe paint III*, 700 clip art set	194.99	209.99	12 months at home	
A600 HD 20		269.99	284.99		
EPIC PACK PLUS 40	Epic, Rome, Myth, Trivial Pursuit, Amiga Text, Deluxe Paint III*, 700 clip art set	319.90	334.90		
EPIC PACK PLUS 64		349.99	364.99		
EPIC PACK PLUS 85		389.99	404.99		
A600 HD 80	-	365.99	379.99	12 months return base	
120		415.99	429.99		
210		569.99	584.99		
CDTV MULTI MEDIA	Audio Discs/CD Player, Keyb'd, Fdrive, Mouse, Remote Controller, Caddy, Welcome Disc, Fish Disc	229.99	244.99		Brickette £45
CBM 1084 SD	+ leads	178.90		1 year	PIP Monitor to TV Converter – £99
CBM 1940	Leads. Ideal for AGA	269.99		1 year	
Philips 8833 II	Leads. T & Swivel £10	209.99		1 year at home	
Star LC100C	Top Value 9 pin colour printer	149.99	159.99	1year	
Citizen 240C	24Pin colour	252.90	262.90	2 year	

Return to base HD versions are SD units fitted with top quality 3rd party drives and come with install disc + full documentation. *DPIII needs 2MB for animation on HD models.

NO OTHER DEALER CAN BEAT OUR CREDENTIALS

- Multi-million company with 9 years experience in Commodore product and here to stay
- Commodore trained staff are friendly and helpful and are parents, multimedia, educational, games, programming or technical specialists (usually more than one!)
- Open 9-6 pm Monday to Saturday and 10.00 am to 4.30 pm Sundays PLUS December late nights on Thursdays (St Albans only) for convenient shopping.
- Callers welcome for advice and demonstration at our 1600+ sq ft High St, Town Centre branches
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- Hardware carefully handled and delivered safely and reliably by caged, insured, top name courier service
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- BFPO and export welcome

NOT JUST ANOTHER MAIL ORDER COMPANY

For years a major player in Amiga Mail Order, Hobbyte also boast extensive expertise and experience in specification and support of multi-machine and specialist systems. Hobbyte have been recommended and trained by Commodore and successfully won major orders and support contracts from London Boroughs, MOD, educational establishments etc. We are pleased to be placed on tender lists. **This expertise is available to all our customers.**

A4000/30 & 40

A4000/30: AGA Chip Set + 68030 processor, 68882 25/50 MHz co-processor option, 256,000 colours from 16.6M, scan doubling for flicker free display, Mouse, Amiga 3.5"/1.76 MB 3.5" drive, Hard Drive as below, Amiga DOS 3.0 system and utilities, **Next day on-site warranty**
A4000/40: As above, but featuring the blistering 68040 processor, with full floating point facilities **NOT** EC version. UK models with on-site warranty...**NOT** imports!

TRADE IN AVAILABLE

HD SIZE MB	A4000/30 1+1MB SUBTRACT £70	A4000/30 2+2MB STANDARD VERSION	A4000/30 2+4MB SUPER EXP. VERSION	A4000/40 2+4MB	EXTRAS
80	WARNING - 1 + 1MB A4000s will not run most serious AGA s/w packages. If required, subtract £70 from 2 + 2MB prices	965	ADD £80 • ADD £80 • ADD £80. 2 + 4 MB version comes with 2MB chip RAM + one 4MB chip of fast RAM, for on-board expansion to 16MB. We do not fit two x 2MB chips of fast RAM, which gives on-board expansion of only 8MB.	1889	Extra 2MB for 2+2 versions £99 • Extra 4MB for 2+4 versions £159 • Microvitec Cubscan 1440 recommended £399.99 • Same day warranty £39.99, extra 2 yrs £99.99
120		1039		1915	
160		1079 SPECIAL		1959	
240		1149		2139	
340		1219		2299	
540		1479		2459	

A4000/30 CO-PROs
68882 25 MHz..ADD £79
68882 50MHz...ADD £159
Fitting FOC if purchasing A4000

HOW TO USE THIS AD

Exclusively from Hobbyte, you can choose your own Amiga and software combination and still benefit from the huge savings only available from package deals.
Want an A600 pack for small children? No problem!
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WE WANT TO BEAT ALL PRICES!
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CD32 CONSOLE
SPECIAL

Choose any* 3 CD discs (see software section) for **£59.90** *up to £34.99 RRP each

CD32 SOFTWARE

Over 75 titles specially written for the CD32 should be in stock (phone for list), inc. Syndicate, Zool 2, Jurassic Park, Chaos Engine, many of which include a full CD music track alongside the game. About half of existing CDTV titles are compatible. CD32 will also play normal music CDs and CD+G discs

CD32 Standard warranty is 12 months return to base.
12 months on-site warranty £39.99
Extra 2yrs on-site warranty £69.99

CD32 Console (with Oscar AGA, Wing Commander, Dangerous Streets, Diggers +Joypad FREE)
£279

CD32 + FMV Card as above
PLUS FREE MUSIC VIDEO DISC
£465

AVAILABLE NOW!
Full Motion Video module for CD32 (with Free Music Video Disc).........£189.
COMING SOON
Floppy drive, Keyboard, Mouse CD32 for A1200

WITH ANY COMPUTER

CHAOS ENGINE, SYNDICATE, PINBALL FANTASIES, NICK FALDO'S CHALLENGE GOLF
ADD £19.99
OR LEMMINGS, SIMPSONS, CAPTAIN PLANET, PLUS D PAINT III & GFA BASIC
ADD £14.95

A1200

1200 2MB	269
1200 +20MB HD	379
1200 +60MB HD	439
1200 +80MB HD	469
1200 +120MB HD	509
1200 +207MB HD	549
Extra 4MB + clock fitted	ADD £200

**CBM APPROVED HARD DRIVES
Full legal installation/utility disc and documentation and come with CBM on-site warranty service.

DON'T FORGET YOUR STARTER PACK! ADD £15 (SEE VALUE PACKS BELOW)

SPECIAL
Deskjet 500C and Starter Pack with any Amiga ONLY £285

FREE WITH ALL 1200s
NIGEL MANSELL AGA, TROLLS AGA AN[D] COMPILATION PACK
4 (top games)
OR DESKTOP DYNAMITE PACK
Wordsworth 2 AGA
Deluxe Paint 4 AGA
Oscar AGA + Denn[is]
Print Manager
PLUS
4 hot list titles
ADD £49
(1200s only)

HOBBYTE VALUE PACKS

Hobbyte are famous for their packs, allowing you to choose what you want, whilst still benefitting from package deal savings.
Remember, a bargain is only a bargain when you like what you get! So, if you aren't Wild, Weird or Wicked, Sleepwalker sends you to sleep, Space Ace leaves you feeling emp[ty], Paradroid does worse, if Basic basically isn't you, exercise your options and get real value for money from Hobbyte

TRAMPY'S AND NODDY'S PACK

Fun and educational for 2 to 11 years
(Some help may be required)

SPECIAL WITH AMIGA £39 | ALONE £59

Noddy's Playtime	8 magical learning games at 3 levels, PLUS Junior Art pack, keyboard overlay and map
OR Big Adventure OR Merlins Maths	6 National Curriculum oriented games, stage 2, 7 to 11
The Shoe People	6 games with Trampy and friends, 6 years and under.
OR Fun School 2	The "Fun School" suite have won every award going. 5/6 wonderful animated games. 3 to 11 years, specify age.
Fun School 3 or 4 OR ADI Jnr Reading OR Counting	The loveable extra terrestrial entertains 4 - 7 year olds and helps towards achieving National Curriculum levels 1, 2+ 3
Deluxe Paint II + 700 Clip Art pics	Pics inc. children, Fairytale + Legend characters, Sport, Cartoons, etc.
Hobbyte Primary Educational PD Pack	Containing 10 fun while you learn games
Hobbyte 30 Easy Children's Games Pack	Simple games, or those with very easy levels. Even the youngest will be able to use some of these

SERIOUS USER'S PACK

Interested in music, programming and graphics? Then this pack is for you!

WITH AMIGA £39 | ALONE £49

Easy Amos	THE programming language. Wonderful manual is simple and entertaining - ideal for complete novices
OR AMOS Professional ADD £10 for this option	97% AF rating - the second highest rating EVER given. Learn to professionally create your own games, utilities. Loads of sample progs included
Hobbyte AMOS PD Greats	Dozens of utilities, Protracker music modules, example programmes that no AMOS programmer would be without.
Deluxe Paint III, plus 700 Clip Art pics	Create your own designs to incorporate into your AMOS progs
MIDI Recording Studio & MIDI Interface	If you have a MIDI instrument, this is everything you need to compose and edit your music
OR AmigaVision	Powerful presentation and production tool

STARTER PACK

A must for new users! All you need in one value pack

WITH AMIGA £15 | ALONE £25

10 blank discs	Make working copies of Workbench and other original applications discs as soon as you get them
Virus Killer	Check discs regularly, especially if sharing with friends
Mouse mat	Helps prevent dirt/dust collecting on mouse contacts

Plus Microswitched Joystick, 80 cap. lockable disc box, Dust Cover

HOT BUG GAMES PACK

The top-selling Hobbyte Hot Lot pack now includes the ultimate joystick !!!

WITH AMIGA £44 | ALONE £59

"THE BUG"	The only joystick ever to be given a Gold rating 92% AF, positive single-handed action, small and lovely!
10 "Hot List" Games The GREATEST!	See listing to the right for current HOT LIST, or phone for latest changes. Children's games available.
80 Prog. Hobbyte PD Greats Pack II 10 blank discs, mouse mat, 80 capacity lockable disc box, plus dust cover	Includes top games like Battlecars, Star Trek, Computer Conflict, Megaball, dozens of arcade classics, board classics and 'shoot-em-ups', Utilities, Word Processor, Spreadsheet, Database + Desktop Publisher and the ultimate virus killers - a must for every Amiga owner!

HOME APPLICATION PACK

Perfect for all Home Office needs

SPECIAL WITH AMIGA £29 | ALONE £49

Virus Killer Disk,
80 Prog. Hobbyte PD Greats Pack - see 'Hottest Lot Pack'
The Works Platinum — WP with UK spell chck, Thesaurus spreadsheet, 'Sideways' utility, database, graphics + comms module
Deluxe Paint III* with animation + 700 Clip Art pics
Digita Home Accounts — Keep track of credit card and bank accounts, budgets, etc
Any Two Hot List Titles

THE HOT LIS[T]

GREAT individu[ally] packaged gam[es] BETTER THAN T[HE] REST !!
(previous RRPs u[p to] £39.99 each)
ANY 10 £29.9[9]
Or see packs across

Thunderbirds (7yrs+) ‡ - 92[%]
Silly Putty - 90%+ lots of m[...]
Elf/Toki/Puzznic (counts as [...])
Paperboy II ‡
Die Hard 2
Colossus Chess @
Challenge Golf
Battleships classic board ga[me]
Graeme Souness Soccer
Neighbours
Frankenstein ‡ @
Captain Planet
Silkworm Helicopter @ 92[%]
Tag Team Wrestling
Edd the Duck ‡
Stack Up ‡
Lemmings 92% AF
Round the Bend ‡
Fist Fighter
Sporting Triangles
World Cricket
Bart Simpson
Spiderman/Cptn America
Arcade Trivia
Xenon - C+VG Game of the [...]
Blade Warrior - A Power, AF, [...] superb reviews
Amie
AWARD WINNERS
Space Ace, Kick Off, PipeMania, [...] (counts as 2)

‡ PARTICULARLY SUITAB[LE FOR] CHILDREN (MAY NEED HE[LP])
@ NOT A1200 COMPAT[IBLE]
TITLES MAY VARY

STOP PRESS! DESKTOP DYNAMITE AGA PACK (SEE 1200 BOX) £79 ALONE

*DPIII needs 2MB for animation on H[D models]

• AMIGA SPECIALISTS • STAR GOLD DEALER • CDTV CENTRE • PHILIPS APPOINTED DEALE[R]

MONITORS/ACCESSORIES

Item	Price
CBM 1084SD 1084/1085 + leads + 2 games	194.90
Philips UK 8833 MKII mon.+leads + on-site	199.90
Tilt + swivel stand for 8833	12.99
CBM 1942 dual sync .28 dpi AGA monitor + speakers	339.90
MICROVITEC CUB-SCAN 1440 14" .28dp for 1200/4000, in-finately variable scan rates between 15KHz (default on boot-up) and 40 KHz for all AGA modes in this range. With tilt and swivel stand. "CUA BEST BUY"	399.99
Microvitec Cub-scan .28dp for 1200/4000 as above, but 20"	1039.99
Microvitec Cub-scan .1782, 17", .27dp, 29-82 KHz horiz. scan	889.99
Adaptor for A1200/Microvitec	29.99
CBM 1936 Hi-res SVGA .28dp inc. tilt & swivel	259.99
Panasonic 1537 31-62kHz	519.90
Philips Brilliance 2110 21"	1790.90
Zy-Fi Speakers	37.90
Zy-Fi Pro Speakers	57.90

FLOPPY DRIVES

Item	Price
Zydec 3.5 external drive, daisychain + on/off	51.50
Cumana CAX 354 3.5 external drive, beige	56.50
PC 880B with anti click + Blitz back up and virus protector	59.90
PC 880B as above, Cyclone compatible	64.99
Dual drive as PC 880B	124.99
High density 1.76MB ext. drive for any Amiga (WB 2)	98.50
High density 1.76MB ext. drive for any Amiga (WB 2) + 10 HD Discs	104.95
Power HD internal floppy for 1500/2/3 4000	94.90
Power HD internal floppy for500/600/1200	94.90
A500 replacement internal floppy	54.99
A600/1200 replacement internal floppy	69.99

HARD DRIVES/ACCELERATORS

1500/2000

Item	Price
GVP HC8/II 40MB	196.99
GVP HC8/II 80MB	289.90
GVP HC8/II 120MB	374.90
GVP HC8/II 213MB	479.90
G Force 030 25MHZ 1MB	384.99
G Force 030 40MHZ 4MB	684.99
G Force 030 50MHZ 4MB	984.99
G Force 040 33MHZ 4MB	1284.99
Extra 2MB for above	POA
Trifecta SCSI 80MB HD	234.90

3000/4000

Item	Price
Fastlane SCSI II controller for 4000	299.90
DKB 4091 SCSI II	269.99
Syquest 44MB internal	289.90
Syquest 88MB internal	359.90
Spare Syquest 44MB cartridge	69.50
Spare Syquest 88MB cartridge	99.50
A4000 130MB	159.99
A4000 170MB	169.99
A4000 214MB	199.99
A4000 260MB	229.99
A4000 340MB	329.99
A4000 450MB	439.99
A4000 525MB	599.99
Self fitting - fitting by our engineers ADD	£15

500

Item	Price
A530 1MB 40MB	392.00
A530 1MB 80MB	489.00
A530 1MB 120MB	589.99
A530 1MB 213MB	693.99
A530 68882	218.99
GVP HD8 42MB	194.90
GVP HD8 80MB	296.99
GVP HD8 120MB	394.99
SOME HD8 REFURBS AVAILABLE	FROM £169
A590 20MB	199.99

Item	Price
A500 Internal 20MB HD	184.99
A500 Internal 60MB HD	249.99
A500 Internal 80MB HD	279.99
A500 Internal 120MB HD	339.99
Trifecta SCSI 80MB HD	289.99
A570 for 2.04 1MB 500	98.90

A600/1200

Item	Price
GVP 85 MB HD 600/1200	274.99
GVP 1230 030 accel for 1200	239.90
GVP1230/40MHZ/4MB 68882 Co-Pro for 1200	479.99
M1230 XA 40MHz	269.99
M1230XA 40MHz 4MB	429.99
M1230 XA 50MHz 4MB	519.99
Microbotics VXL30 25MHz	219.99
VXL 30 40MHz	339.99
2MB Burst RAM for above	179.99

A600/1200 HD UPGRADES

	SELF FITTING* (on-site invalidated)	CBM APPROVED FITTING** (with on-site)
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SKIDMARKS



Acid Software are looking to create the kind of reputation Team 17 have had since *Project X*. After *Blitz Basic* comes one of the best top-view racers ever. Tony Dillon has been looking forward to *Skidmarks* for ages. (Stop sniggering at the back!)

Blitz Basic 2 is a bit of a marvel, all things concerned. Just look at *Defender* or *Zombie Apocalypse* and you'll see that you don't need to be a machine code programmer to create some rather stunning results. This is exactly Acid Software's aim, and one look at *Skidmarks* should be enough to silence even the most ardent cynic. *Skidmarks* is for car racing games what *Kick Off* was to football – the start of a new age.

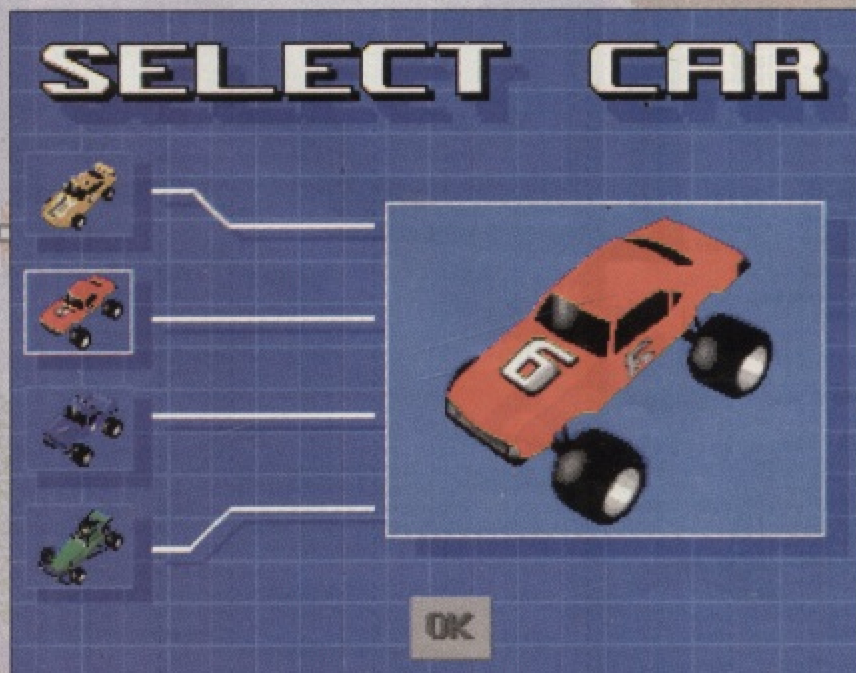
Coming from the multiplayer school of games like *Super Sprint* and *Micro Machines*, *Skidmarks* takes the top-view racing scenario and kicks it into the Nineties with a style and flair that you just don't usually see in games these days. The basis is quite a simple one – take four cars and a winding track, and let up to four players race against one another, all fighting for the best times, sometimes just fighting to stay on the track.

IF YOU CAN'T FIND IT...

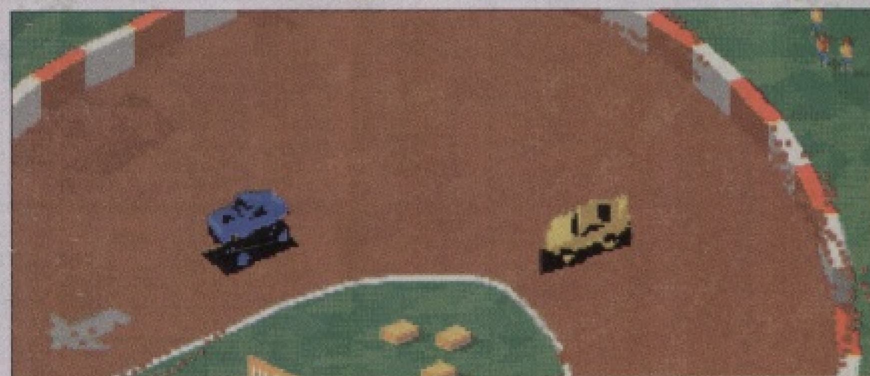
Acid Software are a New Zealand-based software house, and are still in the middle of setting up a full distribution deal in the UK. If you are finding it a little hard to find a copy of this superb game, then you'll be happy to know that you can order a copy direct from Acid by sending a cheque or postal order (no cash) to: Acid Software, PO Box 3172, London NW3. The cost? A measly £25.99.

Opening the box for the first time, you are presented with the main game disk, an AGA car disk for the A1200/A4000 (let's see AMOS do that!) and two track disks, the titles of which show off the programmer's music taste a little too obviously (Pearl Jam's 'Even Flow' and Rage Against The Machine's 'Killing In The Name Of'). By having the tracks, six to a disk, on separate disks, Acid are paving the way for bigger and better tracks as time goes on.

After loading, you can choose to link two machines, set up your function key messages (when two machines are linked, you can send messages back and forth), choose the number of players, set the difficulty level, select your car out of a list of four, choose the computer team to play against and finally get into the game. After you've chosen which of the 12 tracks to race on, of course!



Left: **Before each race you can select the type of car you want to drive – a sporty number or a more rugged 4x4?**



Two player on a single screen can get a bit hectic, as your vertical view of the road can be somewhat limited.

The controls work in the same way as most games of this ilk. The fire button accelerates and the left and right buttons steer your car. Pulling back brakes, but who ever uses that? From this point on, everything gets different. You've probably noticed from the screen shots on this page that the game is viewed isometrically rather than straight top-view, which has given Acid a lot of scope to play with a more three dimensional track. Corners are banked, which affect the way your car steers, and rough areas of straights and jumps mean you lose control when your car

As you can see from this corner, the track gets a bit of a mess after you've run over it a few times.



Just one of the twelve tracks supplied with the game. This one features some particularly nasty crossroads.

is in the air. Keeping it under control is a real skill, and that's one of the secrets to what makes the game so damn playable. I haven't been able to put it down yet, and I doubt I will for quite a while.

One thing that I'd love to be able to show you, but can't, is the realism of the graphics. Okay, they might look a little pokey on still screenshots, but when you see everything moving you can see why it took so long to do the graphics. Each car is made up of 800 sprites (32 rotations with five elevations and five pitches), all rendered in *Imagine 2*, all light sourced and totally believable. All that's lacking are the turning wheels, but who's being picky?

Skidmarks is one of the most instantly playable games I have ever played, along with one of the best two player games ever released on the Amiga. Okay, so it won't take too long before you can beat the computer opponents on all tracks, but who can't beat the computer teams in *Sensible Soccer*? The strength here lies in the electric atmosphere generated by a good two or four player game against opponents of equal skill. The manual suggests you should spill beer on the lap of your enemy to give yourself an advantage, and you can see why after a few games. *Skidmarks* is a landmark in computer games, and if future *Blitz Basic* games are as good as this one, we are going to see the Amiga and CD32 become the games machines of the next decade.

WHERE DID THAT NAME COME FROM?

Skidmarks might seem like a bit of an odd name for a racing game, schoolboy humour aside, but it does have a good reason. When you start a track, the road is clean and smooth, but once you start skidding round corners, you notice that your car leaves a long trail of disturbed dust. It's such a small bonus, but it adds to the realism of the game no end. I have never seen an effect like it, and it just shows Acid Software's commitment to creating the best games yet seen.

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GENRE:	ARCADE
TEAM:	IN HOUSE
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NUMBER OF DISKS:	4
NUMBER OF PLAYERS:	1–4
HARD DISK INSTALLABLE:	YES
MEMORY:	1Mb

GRAPHICS	95%
SOUND	91%
LASTABILITY	93%
PLAYABILITY	94%

'A milestone in Amiga games. One of the most playable racers ever.'

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COOL SPOT

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He bends, he flips and he's got very cool glasses. He's also one of the hottest characters to appear on the Mega Drive, with thousands of console addicts falling for his charm and character. Spot is a bit of a console hero, but what most console owners don't realise is that the character was actually first used in an *Othello*-style puzzle game called *Spot*, where his flipping and bending just didn't seem to fit at all. So Virgin took him, loosened him up a bit, and stuck him in a platform game of his own.

If you leave Spot alone, he goes through all sorts of contortions to get your attention.

Spot isn't very tall, so many of the levels are set in oversized environments, like the beach where deckchairs are hundreds of feet tall. This makes room for some unusual enemies, such as oversized spiders or rats in raincoats who fire small pieces of cheese at you. What it also makes room for is some of the most best character animations seen on the Amiga. *Cool Spot* stretches, yawns, taps his feet, polishes his specs, flips, leaps, spins, bounces and generally does as much as he can, and it looks great. There are dozens of frames of animation for every action, and that goes some way to explaining why the Mega Drive version was such a success.



Unfortunately, *Cool Spot* was a game designed for the consoles, and used their custom graphic chips well. On the Amiga, it just plays far too slowly. The problem with all those frames of animation is that it takes a hell of a long time to get through them all, and as a result, Spot ends up crawling all over the screen when he should be sprinting. A well polished game, with plenty of small touches and all the other forms of garnish that make a good game great, but the lack of speed just leaves the game entertaining to watch, but a drag to play.

61%

Tony Dillon



There are plenty of bonuses dotted about the place, but you have to search for them sometimes.

Level 2 has a very dodgy backdrop indeed.

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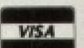
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RAILROAD TYCOON

ACTION 16 - £12.99



Where shall we begin? BR's problems explored.

Sid Meier has been responsible for some of the best strategy games to hit the Amiga. His most famous creation is Microprose's *Civilisation* – but his most fun game is definitely *Railroad Tycoon*. Having chosen which country you intend to befuddle with your rival to British Rail, every aspect of running a railway is thrown at you. Starting with a small sum of cash, you must open your first branch line, buy a few trains and set up a reliable system – ah, if only BR could do that! From this little acorn – and via an extremely simple user-interface – you watch your empire grow as more trains and lines are added. Sounds simple? Nope, because maintenance, development and wages take a huge cut of your profits, and the books need to be balanced whilst you try to ensure your service is the best on offer – there's none of this 'wrong kind of snow leaves on the line' excuses; here, a disaster can cost you everything.

Basically, this is an excellent budget title. It has longevity, variety and, most of all, it's fun. Running a huge railroad is extremely taxing and mine always seemed to collapse just as I was about to break even. Playing trains was never like this – but this is more fun than the Hornby variety.

91%

ASHES OF EMPIRE

ACTION 16 - £12.99

Mike Singleton took his *Midwinter* idea one step further with *Ashes of Empire* – but sadly lost some playability along the way. Whereas *Midwinter* was a neat combination between arcade and adventure ideas, *Ashes* is buried within a complex scenario and fails to succeed as both entertainment and as pure strategy. The game's scenario is set in the not-too-distant future with four of the world's leaders at each other's throats. As part of a peace-keeping force, your task is to make sure they all end up the best of mates and don't blow each other up. To do this, you navigate a series of polygon-based arcade sections, before indulging in seduction, kidnap, or whatever the game's menu system offers as you try to win people over to the side of good (barf!).
It's hard to criticise *Ashes* on any one count. It looks superb, features loads of characters to interact with, and also sets a huge game task. However, little aspects of the game come across as half-baked – the people interaction is very limited, for example – and, somehow, the whole thing fails to gel. The 3D sections seem out of place when you're on your way to converse with an important leader, and everything seems given over to aesthetics as opposed to content – fractal maps, etc. Great for people who want to see what their Amiga can do, but not one for those who yearn for a game to keep returning to.

65%

POWERMONGER

THE HIT SQUAD PLATINUM £12.99

Bullfrog's follow-up to *Populous* combined the God sim's unique perspective, but added a war-gaming theme to the action – and the result was one of the most accessible war games you're ever likely to play. Gone are the dull-looking SSI-style map screens where very little seems to happen; in *Powermonger* you see the results of your strategies, with your little on-screen recruits running riot across a series of landscapes. Cast as an all-powerful Warlord, your basic aim is to amass a huge army and wipe the floor with a range of computer-controlled opponents. To do this, battles must be fought, alliances made (and broken), and bases set up – and all via an easy-to-use menu system. Ocean's welcome rerelease offers would-be Generals the chance to experience both the delights of the original game and the add-on data disk which brought the battle into the 20th century – World War 1, to be precise. Originally, Bullfrog had hoped to continue the data disk idea through a series of famous wars but that seems to have fizzled out somewhat. Still, Ocean have a real cut-price winner on their hands here and whilst *Powermonger* is by no means as ground-breaking as *Populous*, casual strategists should welcome it with open arms.

83%



Amassing your army with a set plan in mid slaughter.

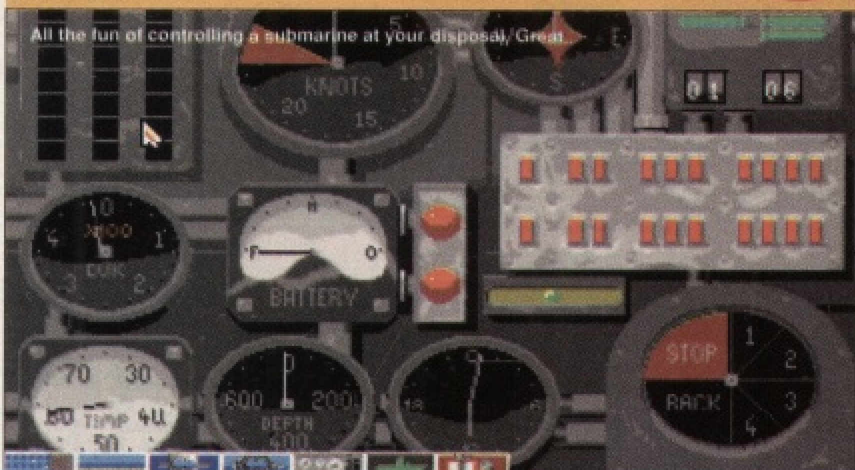
SILENT SERVICE II

ACTION 16 £12.99

It's hard to believe, but the original C64 version of *Silent Service* is over ten years old. This sequel brought Microprose's mixture of battle and maintenance to the Amiga – but never quite came up to the standard of the likes of *F19* or *F15 II*. Basically, having chosen your war scenario, you're dumped in a sub and left to plot a course through a series of battles. The everyday running of the sub is yours for the taking, with maps to look at, gauges to read, and periscopes to look through. In addition, every now and then a really tedious bit of fighting comes along where badly defined ships appear on the same old horizon for you to pick off. Great stuff...

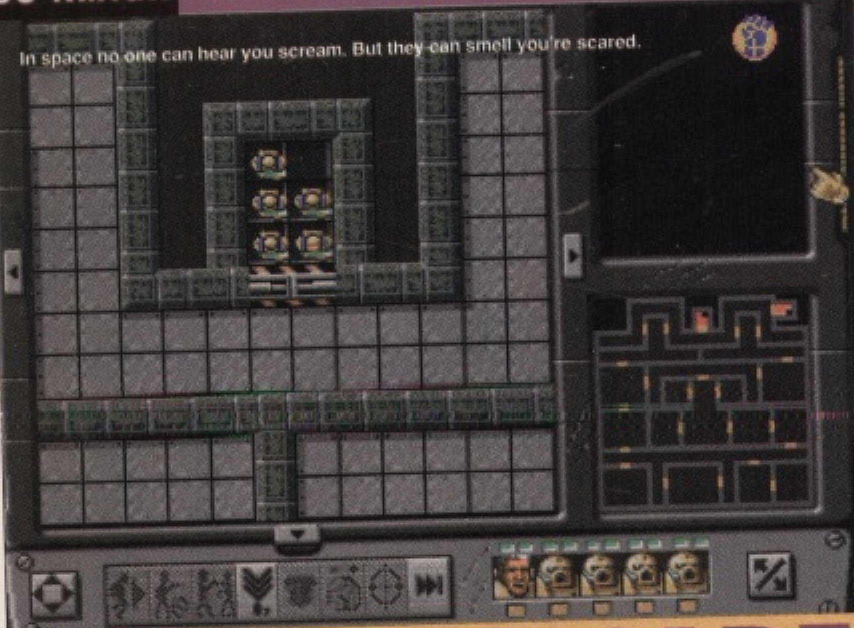
Nope, it seems that *Silent Service II* failed because of its simplicity. Basically, I can't imagine actually running a sub being that interesting, but this takes mundane tasks to the limits. Very little happens, and the only chance for excitement comes via the aforementioned repetitive battle scenes. If you want a decent Microprose sim, make sure it has planes in it and loads of different options – because this simplistic effort deserves to sink without a trace.

54%



All the fun of controlling a submarine at your disposal. Great.

»



SPACE CRUSADE

GBH GOLD £9.99

By rights, board-game-to-computer conversions should be the ultimate evolutionary step. Whilst D&D fans have to use their imagination to conjure up images of the huge Cyberbeast from the planet Morlox, the Amiga can present them in all their pixelated glory. *Space Crusade* is a prime example of this, and actually manages to add real atmosphere to a potentially dull board game conversion. The Alienesque plot drops the player into the combat boots of a hardened Space Marine. A huge, creature-filled spacecraft has entered an Earth zone so, with your buddies, you've been sent on a reconnaissance mission to find out whether it contains anything vaguely hostile. Thus, complete with a motion tracker device, you and your gun-toting mates wander the decks in search of action.

For a board game conversion, *Space Crusade* looks the business. Gremlin give the player the choice of an isometric play area complete with huge sprites and tasty effects, or a simple plan view which plays slightly faster than the 3D version. Sending your party exploring the decks of the ship is extremely easy to effect thanks to a simple control system, and this is essential in a game such as this where you'll need to switch between key characters in the heat of battle. Such accessibility is what makes *Space Crusade* so much fun, but the main reason it won itself a legion of fans first time round is because of the claustrophobic atmosphere its dark rooms generate. A stunning game, and if you missed it first time round, make sure you get it this time.

88%

BLACK CRYPT

THE HIT SQUAD PLATINUM £12.99

EA's answer to FTL's classic *Dungeon Master* and US Gold's equally smart *Eye Of The Beholder*, it seems that most people were too busy in other dungeons to take any notice of *Black Crypt* first time 'round. In fact, despite garnering all manner of high scores and awards when it was first released, *Crypt* never quite got the attention it deserved. Hopefully, this time round it will as *Black Crypt* is quite simply one of the best games to appear from the Hit Squad label since its inception. It's all very familiar stuff, with the player wandering around a smooth-scaling 3D play area in search of spells, treasure and the obligatory D&D-inspired monsters to kill, but it's extremely well presented and easier to get into than *Dungeon Master*. It's also much bigger and, despite what anyone says, size does count...



Don't miss out on your chance to pick up a copy of *Black Crypt* this time. At a mere thirteen quid it represents simply stunning value, and to miss it now would be to ensure your RPG collection is without a true jewel in its crown.

90%

THE LOTUS TRILOGY

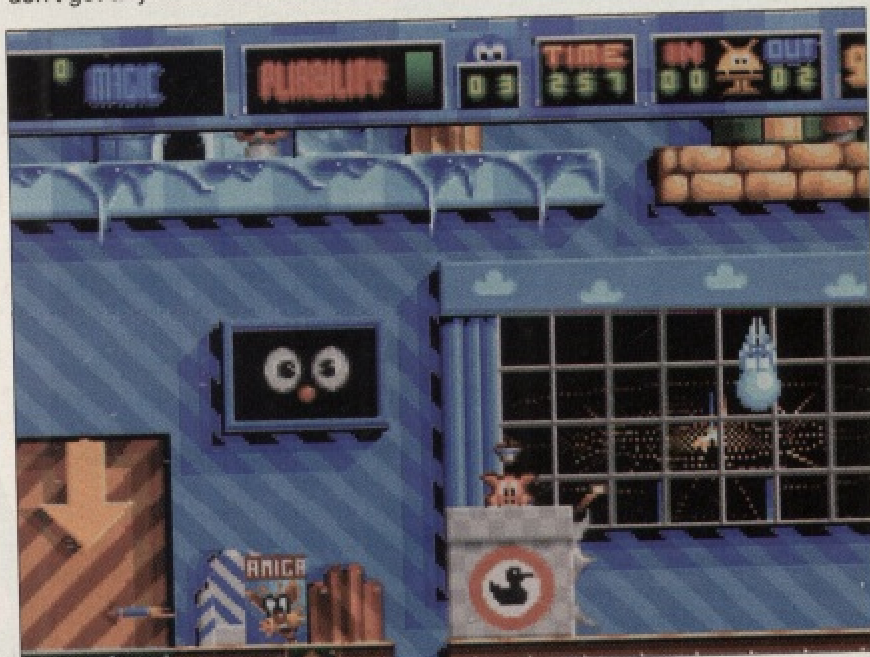
GREMLIN £29.99

Gremlin's road race series comes to a logical conclusion as the Sheffield-based wonders bundle all three together in one big package. Shaun Southern first wowed Amiga owners with his fabby racer over three years ago. A one or two-player game, the original *Lotus* is a brilliant race against time or a mate set across a series of tracks. For the sequel, however, Shaun tinkered with the basic concept, using the entire screen for the one-player mode and giving a more *Out-Run* ish feel to the game by adding a number of weather changes and different scenarios to the action. In doing this, he created what must still rank as the best racing game to hit the Commodore machine – even better than the third in the series. Yes, because several months after *Lotus II* appeared, the third game hit the shelves offering all the above and a construction kit, too.

Of the three, it has to be said that the third is the weakest of the bunch. The first *Lotus* is quite simply one of the best two-player games ever to grace the Amiga (yes, alongside *Bubble Bobble* and *Kick Off II*!); whilst the sequel is similarly addictive and looks ten times better than most of its rivals. Thus, all the third game can offer is the construction kit – which wasn't really enough to make it a worthwhile buy as a full-price title. Still, we're talking compilation time here and, as such, *Lotus III* is a reasonable way to round off the set.

Car fans can't go far wrong with this compilation. The first *Lotus* is a genuine Amiga classic – as is the second – and there's the chance to extend the package's longevity with the construction kit. There's every chance of the buyer suffering from *Lotus* overkill – but, hey, driving games don't get any better than this.

92%



Plasticine fun in *Silly Putty*.

SILLY PUTTY

GBH GOLD £9.99

System 3's *Putty* always struck me as a bit of a programming challenge. The idea of a bouncy character who can perform an almost infinite number of elastic moves is a good one, but to cram all these features into a platformer and still make it playable just doesn't sound feasible. Still, they managed to pull it off, scoring a mammoth 93%. Playing it after a year break, I can still see why.

Basically, the inhabitants of Putty Moon have been kidnapped by an evil wizard who is planning on turning them into chewing gum. As the last free member of the putty race, it's up to you to free them by ascending a huge tower and avoiding death at the hands of a seemingly endless variety of wacky creatures. What follows is a platformer which features an extension of the usual bouncing, jumping things a platform character can do, with Putty also inflating himself, dropping down a level or bridging gaps with his rubbery body. So far, this sounds great, but the sheer number of foes Putty faces makes the game extremely challenging – especially as you have to spend so long just getting to grips with the controls. As you attempt to collect objects, stun foes AND use the aforementioned moves, it's nigh-on impossible to progress up the screen without the loss of a great deal of energy at first, but with practice you soon find yourself whizzing all over the screen without a care. A very enjoyable platformer, miles ahead of most.

74%

Adventure

They said that she could never keep it up, but here she is again. Taking time out from her more interesting pastimes, Vampyra has returned once more to help you with all your gaming queries and worries

"Hi gang! Well what a month it has been. Did you have a good Christmas? I hope you spent the festive season playing exciting games, for I certainly did. I hope you got all you wished for Christmas even if I couldn't be there to kiss you awake. I'm sorry if Santa was a little late in arriving but I'm afraid that it was my fault. He came to see me on Christmas Eve with a sack of presents, but because I hadn't been a good little girl last year, he said I had to give him something instead. Wow! That's the last time I'll sit on Santa's knee. 'Ho, Ho, Ho'."



FUTURE WARS

I saved up for *Future Wars* for weeks! I can get to the shuttle port but no further as the Croughons capture me and put me in a cell. I have in my possession a blowtorch, lance, newspaper, fuses, key and some documents.

Eric Swanson, Edinburgh.

You are 'supposed' to get captured you silly billy. What you need to know is, how to escape from the prison cell after you've been left there to rot. And the bad news is that you don't have what you need to get out. Got a save game have you? One that's right back in the middle ages where you rescued that girl from the glass tube? I hope so, for that is where you must return to.

Perhaps if you had spent more time searching for the gas-canister which is beside the glass cage instead of staring at the girl you wouldn't be in trouble now.

You need to unscrew the vent that is on the wall of your cell then use the gas in it. You'll also need to use the newspaper to stop the gas seeping back and gassing you.

LORD OF THE RINGS

After working through the first half of *Lord of the Rings* I have come to a stop in the mines of Moria. I have succeeded in collecting the dwarves' tools and received Durin's Axe. However, I cannot escape from the level and I have tried all of the exits in the maze after dropping down the pit. I have been told to use the Golden Wheel to escape and meet Durin's Bain, but how?

I have also come across a dwarf called Kiri who has been trapped in Moria but I cannot recruit him since I already have nine in the fellowship.

Finally, in the lowest deep, I have found a back door which requires the Lady Key. The Lady Token doesn't work so where can I find the key?

Graeme Herdman, Tyne & Wear.

Look, anyone who has already had nine dwarves and still wants more is just being greedy. Goodness, even that nymphomaniac Snow White only had seven. If you really can't do without him, why don't you simply disband someone from the Fellowship and recruit the dwarf?

The golden wheel's purpose is to dispel the magic which endlessly transports you when you are in the Endless Maze. If you have the wheel, the magic will not affect you. At Durin's Bridge you can use the wheel or the Wizard's Staff to destroy the Balrog.

I fear I can't recall a door on the seventh deep that requires a key so I can't help you there.

In the third deep there is a magical barrier that requires the Lady Token.


Lord of the Rings.



Bane of the Cosmic Forge.

Behind Balrog's throne in the seventh deep is a concealed treasure chest. If you use Detect Traps and a Devices skill to open the chest you'll find one of the two Lady Tokens, maybe that is what you are looking for.

BANE OF THE COSMIC FORGE

I don't know what to say to the Delphi in the Dark Forest – it just fades away and refuses to talk to me. The Temple of Ramm is heavily guarded – where do I find the key?

I am also missing the key to the dungeons beneath the Temple. Do you have any tips for this brilliant game?

Anders Rostrup, Solheimsviken, Norway.

I see from your letter that you have made it to the Enchanted Forest. Well if you open the chest which rests there you'll find a Tinkerbell. Take this and use it in the small circle of stones and that will summon fairies.

The fairies will give you a ring and tell you how to talk to the Delphi. To get information from the fairies you're going to have to try and read what's on their minds. You also need to obtain the Staff of Aram from the dark cave for you will need it to cross the boiling oil pit.

There is no key to unlock the Temple gates, you may only enter if they let you in. To achieve this you must equip the first member of your party with the Goat's Mask and then approach the gates. The guards will think that you have brought some virgins to be sacrificed and let you in. I think virgins really get a bad deal in games like this, don't you? Of course I am only going on hearsay.

The gates below the Temple only open from the inside and you would have come through them into the forest if you had used another item to get out of the Bane King jail.

HEIMDALL

Please could you tell me where to find Thor's hammer in *Heimdall World 1*? I have had this game for weeks and I would like to see what *World 2* looks like. Any other hints would be appreciated.

D. Thomas, Mid Glamorgan.

Thor's Hammer is found on the island which is guarded by the sea serpent (top right) and you'll need a serpent killer spell to get rid of the ugly brute. Find the old tree on one of the islands, and place three items in its branches to be given this heavy duty spell. On the final island you will meet a wizard who will ask for six scrolls. If you are feeling generous you can give him what he wants.

On the other hand you can instead give the wizard what he deserves. A swift thump is what he deserves, so I'll leave you to decide whether you play it straight or nasty. I warn you now that Thor's Hammer is really big, although it's not just its size that counts (and if you believe that then there is no hope for you) so if you want to move it you're going to need a shrinking spell. Ice cubes down the pants won't help in this case, you'll need to find a shrinking spell in the belongings of a dead monster.

ELITE II: FRONTIER

Here's a couple of tips which will help out 'L' drivers in *Elite II*. Start trading and saving your money until you can afford a passenger cabin. Pick up some people then enter the Buy and Sell section of the game to look at the new and used ships. Search until you find a ship with a minus figure in the part-exchange column and attempt to sell your ship by pressing 'buy'. You will be given the message that you cannot sell a ship with passengers onboard, but you will still be given the money shown as the trade-in value.

At this point you can simply set your joystick fire button to 'auto' and watch the money pour in. I made a million credits this way.

P.S. Vampyra is a BABE! Do you have any posters?

Dave Atherton, Liverpool.



Elite II:Frontier.

'Dear Vampyra'

Feeling disheartened and unloved? Got an awkward little problem with any game that you're too embarrassed to talk about? There there, never mind, Vampyra is here to raise your spirits (and anything else she can get a hold of) and kiss it all better.

I've got an idea which is also helpful for trainee pilots, and it's not a cheat like your naughty suggestion. When you begin you'll need all of the cargo space you can get to help make your trips more profitable, so I suggest you sell your cannon and your atmospheric shielding. Now you can use the extra cargo space to stock up with more goodies for trade.

GOBLIINS II

I'm out of ideas and need help with *Gobliins II*. I'm in the castle and I have opened the well and found the diving suit, but I can't get into the well. And there any adventures in the Dutch language?

Richard Nieraeth, Holland.

I don't know if there are any Dutch adventures, but it doesn't seem very likely. If anybody in Holland is feeling adventurous they only need to take a trip to the back streets of Amsterdam and they can get all the adventure they need.

I don't think anyone in the known world had trouble getting into the well, so that makes you pretty special darling. I suspect it also makes you pretty thick, but let's not dwell on that shall we. The answer is simply to use the diving suit on the well and that should get things moving along swimmingly.

Now do concentrate dear or we're going to be here all day.

Oh dear, all of this writing and thinking has given me a dreadful headache. I think I need to go and lie down in a dark room and have someone give me a soothing massage. Any volunteers?

Write down your little problem and send it in a plain envelope to:-

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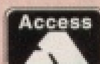
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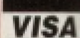


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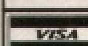
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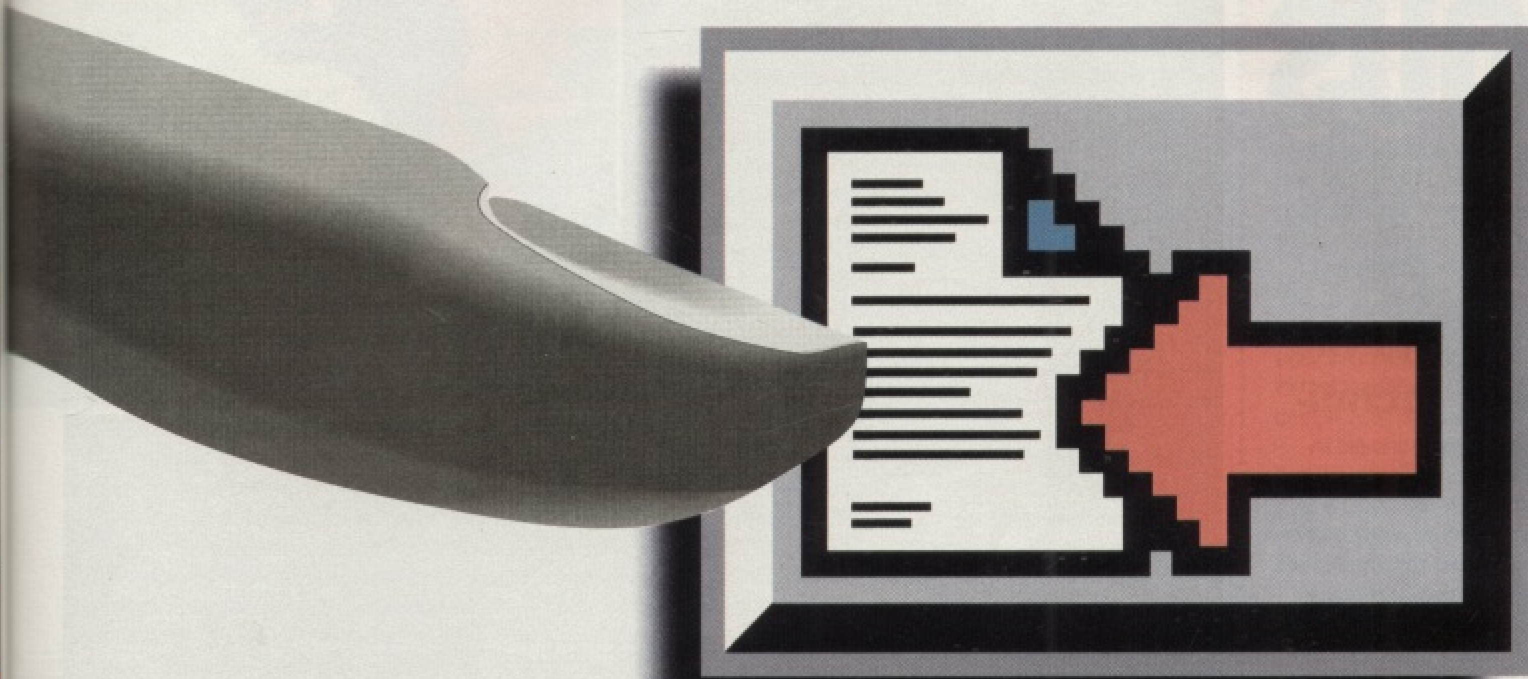
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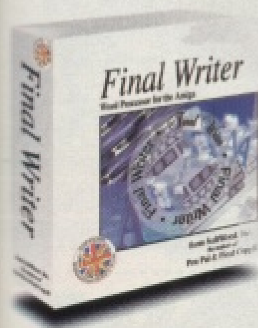
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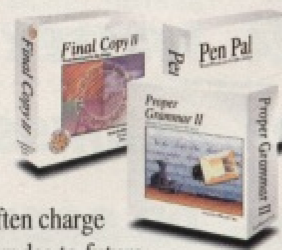
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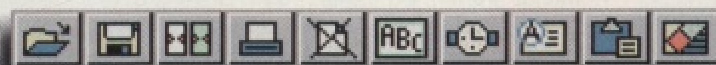
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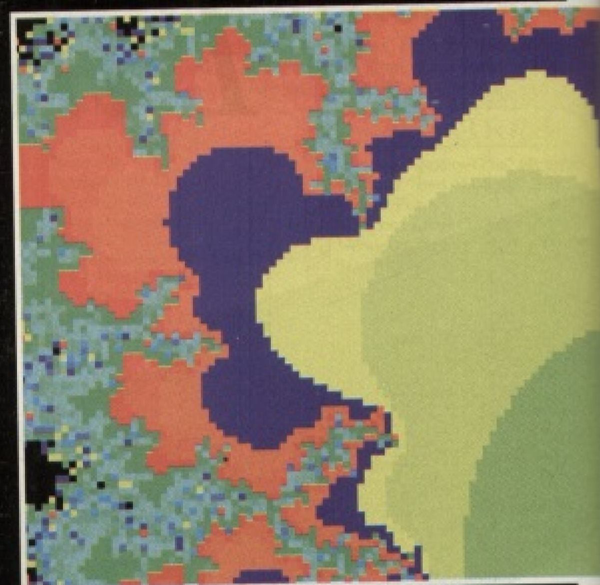
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FRACTALPRO 6.0



Fractals are de rigueur these days along with jars of pasta shells and tie-dye ceiling decorations. Even when you walk down your local high street, chances are you'll see a fractal graphic somewhere, whether it's on the front of an album cover, printed in massive detail on a poster in Woolworth's, or even on alternative clothing (bit of politics etc.).

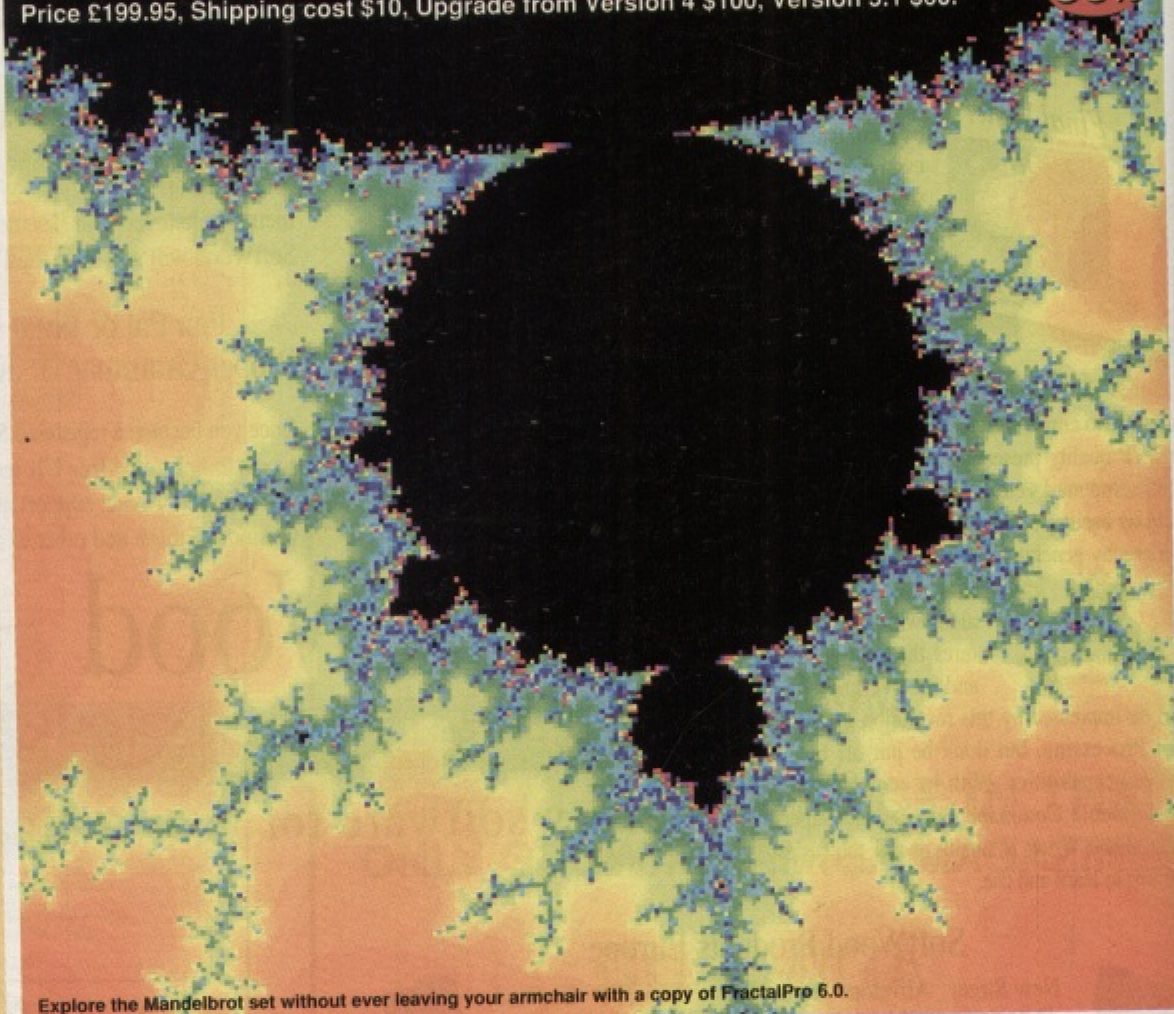
Fractal graphic generators are still popular on the Amiga too – no one seems to quite understand what the fascination is, but there's no doubt that the results are beautiful. Some would even say that they're art in their own right! Thanks to the popularity of PD fractal graphic generators, however, very few commercial programs of this genre have ever been released. The only other commercial 2D fractal generators that spring to mind are Progressive Peripheral's Maths Equarium and Cygnus Soft's soon- to-be-released Mand2000, a demo version of which is proving particularly popular on the bulletin boards of late. The latest arrival on the scene, however, is MegageM's new Fractal Pro 6.0, a fractal graphics generator that will allow you to generate anything from a Mandelbrot or Julia graphic, to more obscure forms of fractal such as the 'Cube', 'Quad' and 'Sine' Mandelbrot's. What's more, because the program fully supports the AGA chip set, you can render fractals with up to 256 or even 262,144 colours – more than enough to burn out anyone's retina! Fractal Pro 6.0 certainly is a far cry from the rather simplistic fractal generators available in the PD libraries. Not only can it handle the AGA chip set, but you can even render images up to 1280 by 960 pixels in size! For true fractal exploration, the program will happily magnify a fractal up to an astonishing 2000 trillion times – more than enough to reveal even the most subtle of details! *ARexx* is fully supported too, so you can easily create an animation of a fractal zoom (all 2000 trillion frames of it!) automatically, leaving you to get on with something else.

The only real problem with Fractal Pro 6.0 is its totally over-the-top system requirements – just to get the program running, you'll need a machine equipped either with a 68040 processor or a maths coprocessor, so that rules out most of us.

The price is a bit over the top too – coming at $199 plus $10 post and packing. For this, you get support for the Video Toaster, DCTV, Firecracker 24 and all the AGA screen modes, but even so, mos people will probably save their money and go for a PD generator instead. The quality may not be so good, but who cares when you're talking about such a saving in money!

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POWERBASE

As soon as you mention the word 'Amiga' to a PC owner you are immediately classed as a games player. 'But', you might say, 'my Amiga has a fully multitasking operating system, and supports all the same hard drives and printers that your PC does. Plus it has better graphics and sound.'

'Okay', says the PC owner, 'but where is the business software?'

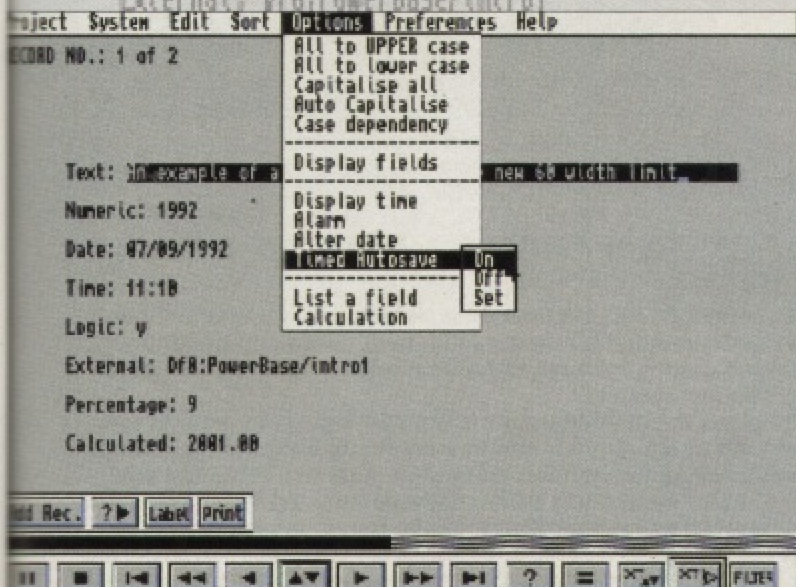
Erm. Good point, and as the number of letters we receive testifies, there is a real need for decent productivity software for the Amiga. It was with trepidation then that I loaded *PowerBase* from Amivision Software, for I'm sure Amivision wouldn't mind too much if I described them as slightly smaller than Microsoft in the software stakes.

If you want a database with video-style controls, *Powerbase* is a cheaper alternative to *Superbase*.

Surprise! *PowerBase* is a database, and it's good. It uses the now familiar video-recorder style buttons at the bottom of the screen, which makes flicking through records very fast. The use of a scroll bar is an excellent way of finding a particular record very quickly. Entering data is quick and easy too. First you decide on the format of your database by defining the fields, as fields are the simplest elements in an individual record. Examples of fields would be a name and address, a title of a CD, a bust size and telephone number: that sort of thing. A record consists of one or more fields, displayed on the screen in one go. The database itself is a collection of fields.

You can also include a field which will display IFF pictures for more visual databases, and add a bit of spreadsheet magic with fields which perform calculations on other fields.

Normally I'd run a mile before using a database, although as I advance in years I'm starting to see the benefits. I was put off the entire genre by several extremely poor commercial and public domain efforts, but *PowerBase* has changed my view. Here, at a bargain price, is a genuinely useful database program. Although modern databases make use of near-programming standard languages to provide powerful searching options, the filter screen of *PowerBase* is probably easier to use.



You too can get your computer to solve anagrams, but for £14.95, maybe not!

Yes, it's a good 'un, and at less than £15 you should consider it if you need to catalogue anything from little black books to small business accounts. Compatibility with the AGA chipset is a slight problem. You need to revert to the ECS chipset from the boot options on a 1200 or 4000. All in all, *PowerBase* is a good program to show PC owners we don't play games all day.

Available from: Amivision Software, 1 Cherrington Drive, Great Wyrley, Walsall, WS6 6NE. Tel: (0922) 414731. Price £14.95.

80%

OCTAMED PRO MANUAL

With most Amiga music packages costing £70 or more, *OctaMED Pro 5* offers great value at only £30. It comes with a comprehensive on-line help feature which may be adequate for those people who are already familiar with the program, but is a little lacking for those hoping to learn the program from scratch.

The program's distributors have come to the rescue with an excellent tutorial manual. The book is over 220 pages long, and contains eight tutorial sections as well as program references, and even has instructions for AMFC Pro. Also included in the package are three supporting disks containing demonstration songs files.

The tutorials are well written, although the typeface used is rather unpleasant on the eye and was definitely the wrong choice. Anyway, the technological jargon is easy to understand, and it is clearly laid in out step-by-step format to guide you gently through what can be a rather complicated program.

At the end of each section there's a checklist of things that you should know before you go on to the next section. This is particularly useful because it enables you to gauge your progress so that you don't try to advance any faster than you're capable of.

Once you've got to grips with the program you'll probably find yourself using the reference section from time to time. This contains a complete description of every aspect of the program as well as a list of all tracker commands listing the way that each of them can be used to perform special effects. Of great interest to MIDI owners is a detailed description of the way that MIDI is implemented in the program enabling you to tailor it so that you can get the very most out of your instrument.

The manual is rounded off by a comprehensive set of appendices, covering everything from the song file format to the synth sound programming language.

If you're struggling under the intricacies of *OctaMED*, or you simply want to get the very best out of it, this is your best and only option. The quality of the printing and binding is rather poor considering the high price tag, but it's the content that counts, and in that regard it scores highly.

Available from: Seasoft, Dept CU, The Business Centre, First Floor, 80 Woodlands Avenue, Rustington, West Sussex, BN16 3EY. Tel: 0903 850378. Price: £15.99.

75%

WORD POWER V2

Have you ever seen one of those little machines which look like pocket calculators, but are really spelling machines? Yes, I was a good boy, although certain people might strongly disagree there, and got one the Christmas before last from Santa Claus and I still use it. It's great fun, because as well as checking the spelling of all the words I know, it also plays a great game of *Hangman*.

WordPower is sort of like one of those gadgets, however, it is not as good. When you eventually get *WordPower* to load (it is more than a little tricky – it gurued my CDTV and A500 instantly, but ran on the A4000 with ECS chipset selected) you can enter a word and it will automatically spell check it for you. If the word happens to be a new one, it can be then be saved to a user dictionary as well.

To make it slightly more useful than an automatic dictionary, *WordPower* will also search for words with missing letters: thus KE??LE will find KETTLE. Do you like anagrams? Enter the letters and if the word is among the 36,000 present, up it pops.

That's about it really. I was very disappointed to find no word games (although the *Scrabble* score for each word is displayed.. which is, erm, useful) and no intelligent anagram searching.

All in all, *WordPower* is different. If all the bugs were fixed and a few other features added I'm sure it would find an audience. But not here, I'm afraid.

Available from: Amivision Software, 1 Cherrington Drive, Great Wyrley, Walsall, WS6 6NE. Tel: (0922) 414731. Price: £9.95, post and packaging included.
***WordPower* is supplied with an instruction manual.**

50%

Aladdin 4D



The incredibly detailed Space Shuttle image is another excuse for some flares - this time as jet exhausts.

Virtual Reality or Walt Disney licence? John Kennedy takes the bull by the horns and investigates.

If there is one thing the Amiga is good at, it's graphics. The new display modes offered by the A1200 and A4000 machines can produce images of incredible clarity and have resulted in upgrades for all sorts of programs.

Programs which depend on graphics are amongst the first to be improved, and you can't get more graphically orientated than rendering programs. The joy of rendering is that anyone, no matter how bad at drawing, can create realistic pictures. It's an addictive cross between Lego and photography as you build objects and shapes before producing full-colour pictures of the result.

The first catchphrase created by the Amiga marketing board (if there ever was one) was 'your imagination is the only limit' and it has never been more true.

You can make a picture of absolutely anything, and what's more you can animate it too. Anyone with even a passing interest in graphics or desktop video simply must give it a try to see what they are missing.

RUB THE LAMP

Aladdin is a rendering program that has been around. It never had the profile of Imagine which is a pity as it considerably more powerful.

The first thing you'll see when you run *Aladdin* is a set of XYZ axes rotating in front of you. Actually, you won't see anything unless you remember to connect the dongle to the joystick port. Software piracy will destroy the Amiga, so don't grumble about unplugging your joystick. Besides, unless you want to multi-task several 3D programs (a mad thing to even attempt) there are no ill effects other than mild irritation when you forget it, and need to power down.

With the dongle in place you'll see the axes part of the editor screen where all the objects are created and manipulated.

Unlike most other rendering programs, *Aladdin* only provides one view of an object at a time, although you can quickly change to flat X,Y and Z views as required.

The numeric keyboard is used to adjust the viewing angle, which means you can quickly rotate the object as though you were actually holding it in front of your face.

This approach might appear more natural than a 'tri-view' but it does take a bit of getting used to if you have ever used a program such as Imagine or *Real 3D*.

Objects are created on a point-by-point basis which makes for incredible accuracy but is hard

CHALK AND CHEESE – REAL3D AND ALADDIN

The Amiga market is cheerfully flooded with rendering packages, each with their own unique features. No two programs are the same, but at the basic level they must allow the user to create and manipulate objects, control the environment and render stills and animations.

The current state of the art program is *Real 3Dv2*, which offers just about every feature under the sun. Objects in *Real* are created by combining and manipulating graphics primitives: spheres, cubes and pyramids. It sounds a lot like hard work, but its a very fast way of quickly building real-world things. Equally important is the rendering speed: the use of primitives speeds the process up considerably.

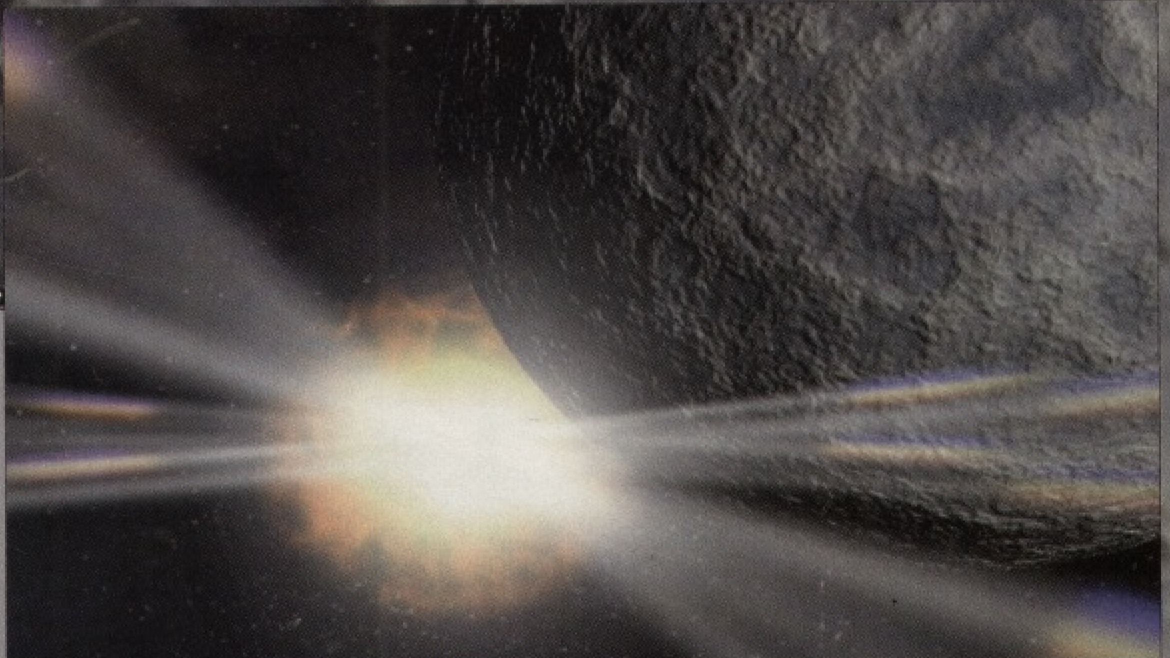
By contrast, *Aladdin* is a point-based system. Objects are built from scratch with small flat facets, and each individual point can be moved until it is in the perfect position. A lot of facets can be created at once using various tools, and with a little effort objects can be created with a lot more accuracy than with primitives.

***Real 3D* still scores with its advanced 'real world' physical modelling: collision detections, gravity, depth of field, as well as it users definable editor and unique object hierarchy system. Aladdin does however have 'lens-flare' the realistic star-shaped halo effect around lights caused by real camera optics: but this might not be reason alone to buy it.**

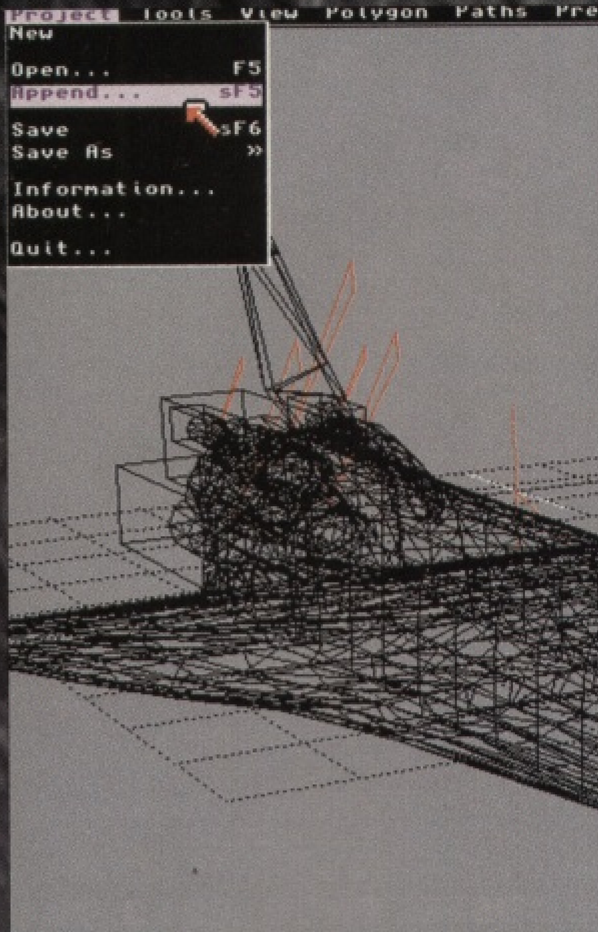


WHY?

You might be asking yourself what is the point of image rendering. Wouldn't it be easier to take a photograph instead of waiting 12 hours for a single image?
Here are some applications for rendered images:
LOGOS: add a spinning chrome identifier to your home videos.
ART: creating pictures for their own sake.
SPECIAL EFFECTS: make your own Seaquest DSV or Star Trek TNG by generating the effects with your Amiga. That's how the professionals do it - why not you?
GAMES: generate the sprite data for objects for your games: both *Skidmarks* and *Stardust* used this method.
FUN AND PROFIT: modelling an entire object and rendering it is actually fun!
Rendering a film can make you money...



This has to be the most impressive texture map I've yet seen, and it is set off perfectly with some trendy flares.



Aladdin uses a single view editor, but objects can be spun and zoomed quickly enough to allow detailed manipulation.

going. Getting the program to create all the polygons for you is a much better idea, and *Aladdin* is crammed with shortcuts in the form of tools.

The easiest way to build something is to find an axis of symmetry, and then mirror, rotate or extrude the object around it. For example, you can create a sphere by rotating a semi-circular arc around 360 degrees, or a donut by spinning a circle with an offset: it's not as hard as it sounds!

When building complicated objects, the ability to switch to a different 'space' is very welcome. If you are building a car object, the option to take a wheel away and work on it by itself can simplify things considerably.

It doesn't take long before you have a wireframe object slowly rotating on your screen and you're ready for some action.

ANIMATION

Creating animations is probably the easiest part of *Aladdin*. Objects – and that includes the viewpoint from which the observer watches the virtual world inside computer – can all follow spline paths, and even rotate whilst they are doing so. Objects can also be subjected to waves and deformations for even more realistic/bizarre sequences.

A great preview option will display a wireframe animation in real time, or at least it will if the scene isn't too complicated. Larger projects, such as the space shuttle example, take a good few seconds between frames.

When you're happy with the preview you set the image rendering, and then go and watch TV, read CU AMIGA or sleep for an hour or eight depending on image size and the number of frames. A useful feature is the time remaining display, which will allow you to make careful estimates as to the amount of beer you can drink. Hopefully, when you return your eyesight won't be too blurred and the animation will be ready to load into *Deluxe Paint* for display.

Unlike *Caligari*, *Aladdin* is a true multi-tasking program which is handy whenever you need to write a review and render pictures simultaneously. *Aladdin* does share the editor's single view, but doesn't manage it quite as smoothly.

TEXTURES

On a par with most other rendering programs, *Aladdin* fully supports textures (both bitmapped and procedural) for adding a authentic finish to objects. Textures can be blended, and also change with time for animation purposes.

Resisting obvious puns, gas objects are also supported and you might be surprised how often they come in useful. Unless a beam of light actually hits something, it will remain completely invisible: not terribly impressive. Surrounding the beam with a cloud of translucent gas will achieve a much better result.

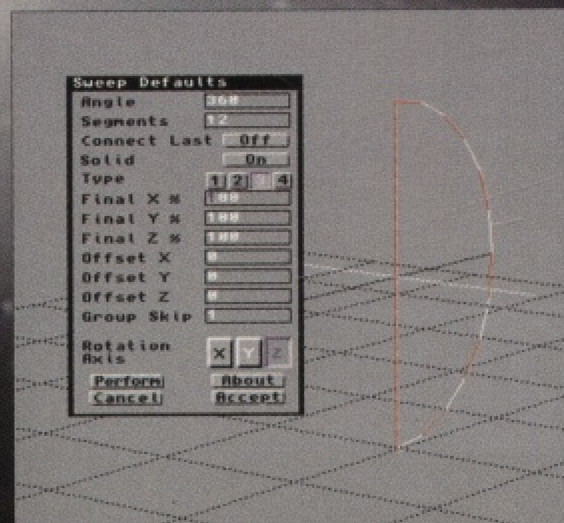
Modelling planet atmospheres, candle flames, foggy scenes and clouds of steam are all possible with gaseous objects and provide an extra degree of realism.

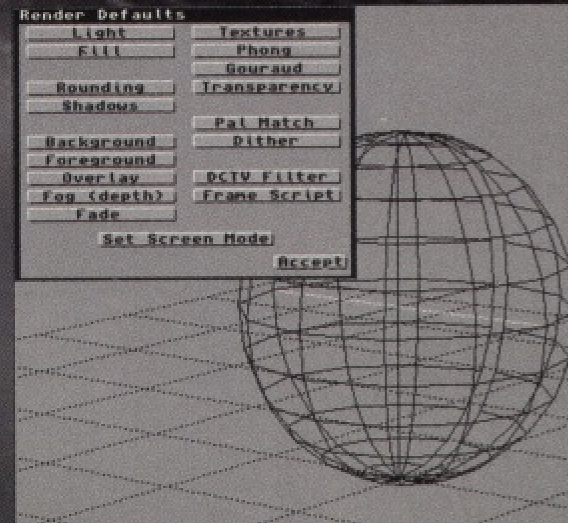
Something new is the inclusion of lens flare – the star-shaped halo around lights which photographers are usually trying to minimise. Flares are caused by the mechanics and optical properties of the camera, and previously the only other package to include was Lightwave, the render bundled as part of the VideoToaster. *Aladdin* includes the concept of 'flare objects' which are akin to gas. You can apply textures to them, which and you can control their shape and colour.

Overall, rendering quality is high – as the images used to illustrate this review should prove. Aladdin can render in any Amiga mode or directly to disk in 24-bit format for the best possible results. Rendering speeds were good on my A4000/30: much the same as *Real* and *Imagine*.

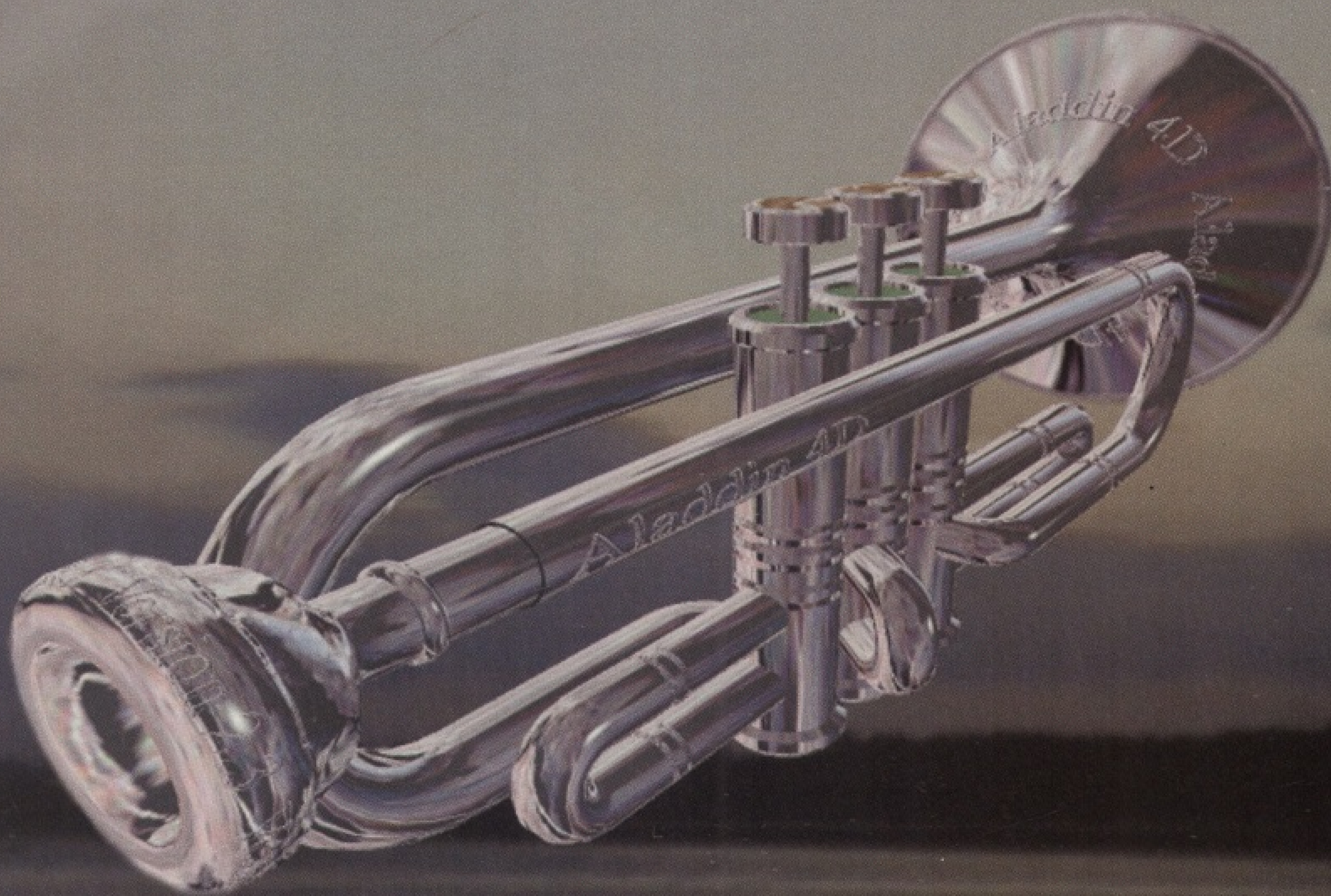
UPDATE

This version of *Aladdin* is an update to that touched upon in the October 1993 issue of CU »





Here is how a typical object is created with *Aladdin*. First a two-dimensional arc is created, then it is rotated around the central axis with the 'sweep' tool. Finally, the rendering options are set and you wait for the image to appear.



Metallic finishes abound in this exquisite trumpet.

» AMIGA, and it now includes some very welcome additions.

For a start, the AGA mode HAM8 is now supported and the collection of editing gadgets have been improved with the inclusion of a scrolling word list. A new 'open systems' approach means that if you can program, you can add your own tools, which is an excellent idea. The manual has also been improved, and the disks come with plenty of example pictures and example projects.

The Retina graphics card has been added to the list of Opalvision, DCTV, Firecracker and Resolver which means owners of these fine 24-bit display systems will be more tempted than most.

On the negative side, *Aladdin* is still a very difficult program to use. Some of this is due to the very nature of image rendering, but most of the time it's just bad design. You know the features are all in there somewhere, but getting at them is far from easy as the user interface seems trapped in the murky world of Workbench 1.3. That single viewpoint soon starts to slow down – even on an Amiga 4000.

JARGON BUSTERS

AGA: The new graphics chipset present in A1200, A4000 and CD32 that allows screen modes with more colours and higher resolutions. HAM8 is an AGA mode that permits up to 262,144 different colours on screen at once.

PROPERTIES: Each object in *Aladdin* can have various properties or attributes, such as transparency, hardness, and colour. These effect how the object appears when it is rendering.

RAY TRACING: Mathematically calculating the colour of each pixel on the screen by imagine it as the point where a light ray intersects the plane of the screen. The ray is traced back in time, as it is reflected and refracted by the objects in the scene.

RENDER: The process of calculating an image based on a particular scene of objects and light sources. Usually takes a long time.

SPLINE: A smooth curve which flows through several control points.

TEXTURES: The appearance of an object can be improved by adding a texture. An example of bitmap texture would be a drawing of a piece of wood. When an object is given this texture, it will appear to be made from wood. A procedural texture is one mathematically generated.

CONCLUSION

Aladdin is a curious program. It has benefited from a great deal of work, with many improvements and additions.

However, it remains difficult to use. The complicated requesters and the meaningless menu items makes it a pig to get to know properly. It faces direct competition from other point based programs such as *Imagine* and *Caligari*, and although it has some unique points it doesn't fair particularly well. If Imagine 3.0 ever surfaces, *Aladdin* will require another major upgrade to remain competitive.

However, if you do persevere you will find Aladdin a very powerful image program. Many powerful editing and rendering features are present, and the 'write your own feature' interface offers plenty of scope.

Five years ago I would have wet my pants at the prospect of using Aladdin in preference to Sculpt 4D – today I find it hard to summon the enthusiasm to load it, and much prefer *Real 3Dv2* or *Imagine* instead. CU

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EASE OF USE ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 65%
A pig to get to know, although perseverance pays.

VALUE FOR MONEY ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 70%
Rather pricey, especially compared with Imagine and Caligari.

EFFECTIVENESS ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 85%
Some excellent effects are possible. Very good rendering quality.

FLEXIBILITY ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 86%
Lots of textures, gas and lens flare effects, DIY section – it will take a long time to exhaust this program.

INNOVATION ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 70%
It's all been done before.

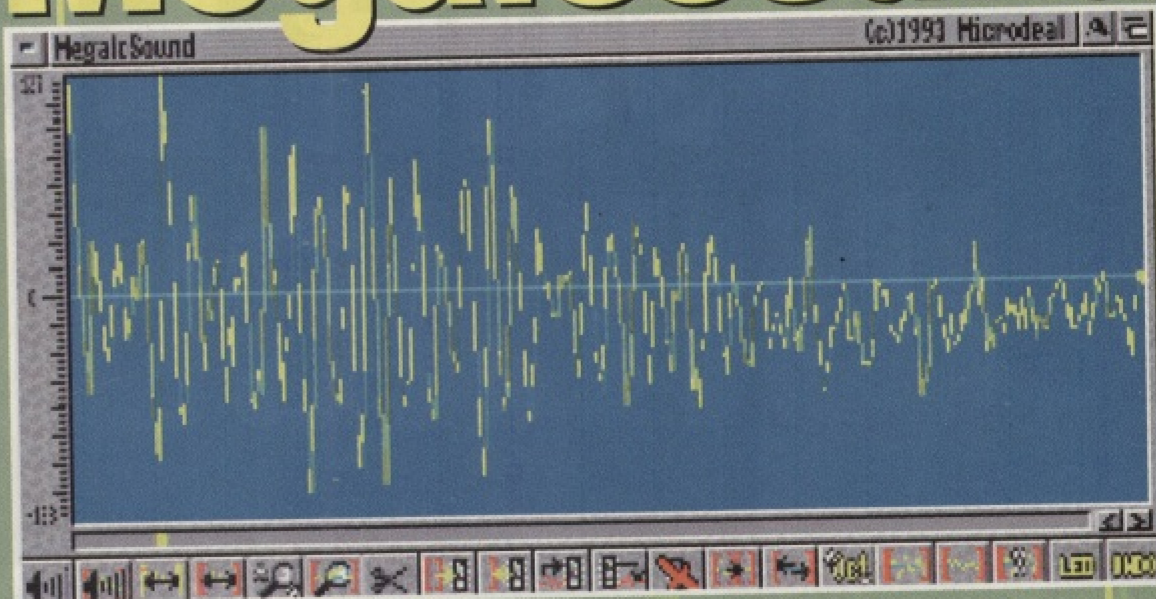
“Good image quality, but difficult to use.”

OVERALL 75%

You've already seen the scorebox – now let Tony (Tony Tone) Horgan fill you in on the details of a spicy new budget sampler.



Megalosound



As we're all still waiting for someone to produce a 16-bit Amiga sampler that actually works, we'll have to stick with 8-bits for now. Microdeal's Megalosound is a new player in the crowded 8-bit field, offering a hostess trolley packed full of new features to tempt you away from the competition.

THE KIT

It's not quite the smallest sampler ever, but it's not far off it. The cartridge is about 5.5cms square, and around 2cms high. Two phono sockets on the back allow you to connect it to any audio source, although you'll need to sort out the relevant leads yourself. It would have been nice if it came with a stereo phono-to-headphone jack cable (with a mini jack convertor) so you could use it straight away. There's also a tiny gain-control knob on the back of the cartridge to adjust the volume of the incoming sound . It's very fiddly to use, but can be extremely hard if you're sampling direct from a CD player for example, in which case you'd have no volume control at the source. The cartridge plugs into the parallel port as usual, and doesn't obstruct the serial port, unlike some of its rivals.

DIRECT 2 DISK

If the shots here look familiar, you probably recognise the style of the interface from SuperSound, the 93% top-rated shareware sample editor featured in September 93's CU AMIGA. The Megalosound software is based around SuperSound, and inherits most of its better points, along with some new goodies too.



These pokey little icons are used for basic editing, but you can be ignored in favour of the control panel.

Top of the new goodies list is the direct to disk recording. This has been done before with Technosound Turbo II and Audition III (although Audition III could only sample direct to floppy), but Megalosound hails this as its leading feature, so let's take a closer look.

Depending on the speed of your drive and computer, and the level of fragmentation of your drive, the results you get could vary from awful to very good. For example, sampling to a floppy disk will give you a top rate of about 8KHz. The advantage of this is that you can record and playback a massive 800K sample on a 1Mb Amiga, but the quality is very low, making the treble sound scratchy. With a hard drive, you can expect to record at around 18KHz, which is enough to grab most of the audible sound spectrum, although treble response still suffers a little. Once you've recorded to disk, you end up with a file that's executable in conjunction with a player program that's included on the program disk. I'll leave it up to you to decide just how useful that might be for your own particular uses.

IN EFFECT

Effects are an area where the software does well. There are two panels of effects options, which include echo, reverb, tremolo, vibrato, chorus, pipe, pan, portamento, high and low pass filters, centralise sample, smooth, phaser, bass and treble boost, distort, metallic, flange and crossfade, all of which are variable in a number of ways. Some are available for processing incoming sounds in real-time, and all of them are available for affecting the current sample in memory. If, like me, you like a good range of effects to choose from to beef up your vocals, phase the odd breakbeat and maybe distort a bassline now and then, these should be right up your street.

USER FRIENDLINESS

Whether you class this product as user-friendly or not depends on how important a standard Amiga interface is to you.

On the down side, Megalosound has an awful strip of icons that are used for the main editing functions, like zooming in, cutting, pasting, looping and so on. They probably make sense to the programmer/designer, but how are we supposed to know that a little bendy arrow and a box means "paste from copy buffer"? It's times like these that I like to be able to go up the pull-down menus, and select what I want from a plain and simple text menu. Unfortunately, all the pull-down menus have been taken out.

Most of the functions are selected from the buttons at the bottom of the screen. Thankfully these are more sensibly marked-up according to their functions, and standard tick boxes and sliders are used whenever necessary.

The effects section is just about the most comprehensive of any sampler with most effects available for realtime and RAM processing.



CONCLUSION

As far as sound quality goes, Megalosound is about as good as anything else for the price, so there's no problem there, and the gain-control is an unexpected bonus. On the features front, nothing this cheap can touch it. Unique editing functions like the intelligent loop-finder, three types of sample mixing algorithms, bundles of effects, direct to disk recording, sampling rates of up to 56KHz in stereo on an A1200 and others make this the most comprehensive sample editor you can buy for a two figure sum. The only two things that are missing are menus and a time-stretch feature. If you can live without those, you can't go wrong. CU

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EASE OF USE	80%
No pull-down menus and some obscure icons, but friendly once you get to know it.	
VALUE FOR MONEY	90%
The cheapest, and just about the best.	
EFFECTIVENESS	92%
Good clear recordings, and uses Fast RAM when available.	
FLEXIBILITY	90%
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INNOVATION	91%
Stacks of new bits and pieces.	

"The new standard in budget 8-bit sampling."

OVERALL 91%

MS130 HARD DRIVE

Want a fast IDE hard drive for the price of a slow one? Tony Horgan installs his samples on a new alternative.

Before we go any further, it should be said that the MS130 is just about the cheapest Amiga hard drive of its size you can lay your hands on. It's also one of the fastest IDE drives too, clocking 652K per second according to SysInfo. I say that now, as what follows might be a little off-putting to the less screwdriver-happy Amiga users among us. Instead of sitting inside the Amiga like some shy little 2.5 inch drives, this one likes to sit proudly next to the computer, linked by its umbilical ribbon to the heart of your Amiga.

NURSE!

Installing the MS130 is a much more delicate operation than for most IDE drives, although the basic technique is much the same. Unfortunately, it involves removing the cover, which will invalidate your warranty. If you're going to fit any type of IDE drive yourself, there's no way around this. Once you've got the top section of the case out of the way, the long ribbon connector needs to be plugged into the IDE slot on the Amiga motherboard. Two further connectors then need to be slotted onto contacts on the internal floppy drive and the mother board. Finally, trail the ribbon out of the left side of the Amiga, and reassemble the casing.

THE OPTIONS

Mediasource are also offering a few variations on the MS130. For £20 less, the drive is available without the box housing, to be fitted internally. This is only recommended however, to those who don't mind removing the internal floppy drive from the Amiga, which is necessary to make room for the drive inside the Amiga. 200Mb and 300Mb drives are also available for £240 and £300 respectively, plus an additional £20 for the box and cables.



The MS130 in all its glory.

READY TO ROLL

It should now be ready to go Power-up, and as the hard drive autoboots to a pre-installed Workbench, there's no need for any software installation before you can use it. To make things even easier for the first time user, there's a complete guide to the MS130, with further information on how hard drives work, explaining things like partitioning, archiving, trouble-shooting and so on.

If that's not enough, you'll also find there's a load of useful PD programs sitting on the hard drive waiting to make your life a lot easier. *Disk Salv, Sysinfo, Disk Speed, Power Packer* and *New Zap* are all found in the Utilities drawer, and there's even a drawer of archived PD software including demos, applications, archivers, fish disks and games. It beats the hell out of a clumsy installation disk and an empty box if you ask me. By the way, if you were thinking this sounds like quite a lot of data, don't worry, all of the installed software only takes about 10% of the total disk space, and deleting what you don't want is no problem.

CONCLUSION

There are so many hard drive options now that choosing the right one for your system can be a bit of a headache, so here's a checklist to help you decide. In short, the MS130 is recommended if: **a**.you want a big drive for a low price, **b**.you want one of the fastest IDE drives available, **c**.you like the idea of a lot of free software and a completely pre-installed auto-booting *Workbench*, **d**.you don't mind invalidating your warranty or you warranty has expired, and **e**.you're not shy of connecting a few wires. Should you run into problems, Mediasource run a technical support line that should sort out any hiccups. It's not the simplest way to add a hard drive to your 600 or 1200, but once you've plumbed it in, the performance is excellent. The idea of bundling PD software and a load of disk utilities with the drive is spot on. It may not be the most visually-pleasing option, but if it's performance at a low price you want, the MS130 is a pretty safe bet. CU

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EASE OF USE 80%
A mixed bag: fiddly to fit but completely pre-installed with software.

VALUE FOR MONEY 90%
You probably won't find a cheaper drive.

EFFECTIVENESS 89%
Fast access, with bags of installed utility software.

FLEXIBILITY 80%
Fast enough for realtime animation and sound-sample spooling as well as mass storage use.

INNOVATION 83%
Quite a breakthrough in the performance-to-price stakes.

"It's cheap, it's fast, and it has a nice grey box."

OVERALL 87%



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D87...pirhana demo
D101..Alcatraz M/Demo 3
D102..A Chaplin Demo
D103..Total Destruction
D105..Mr B Demo Comp 4
D106..Walter S.T. Demos
D111..Defcon 1
D117..Aurora M/Demo
D118..Cult M/Demo 2
D125..Precise Demo
D133..Fasination
D136..Goldfire Megademo
D137/138..So What (2)
D139..Devils"No Reality"
D144..The Silents "Ice"
D145..Crystal Symphonies
D148..Ray Of Hope 2
D149..No Brain No Pain
D158/159.Cyborg Demo(2)
D195..Coaxial Comp
D197..MC Disk 1 Coma
D199..End Of Century 1999
D206..Dreamers 3
D208..Avengers M/Demo
D216/217..Bass o Matic (2)
D218..Disorder Demo
D219..Tuff Enuff
D225..Cool Fridge Demo
D226..Hardcrack M/Demo
D233..Hypnautic Hammer
D235..Six Of One Demo
D238..Planetside
D239..Lemmings Revenge
D240..Total Respray
D243..Budrain 3
D244..Phenomena Inerspace
D245..Total Retrial
D247..Pulling The Trigger
D253..CES Demos
D256..Total Recount
D257..Total Rebate
D262..Spasmolytic
D264..D-Mob M/Demo
D267..Sun Connection 2
D270..Kefrons The Wall
D271..Timex Hydra
D272..Electric Demos 1
D274..Defpackers Demo
D276..Cave La Weird
D279..Iraqui Demo
D280/281..Delerious (2)
D307..L.S.D. Demo
D312..Devils Colours
D314..Trakmo
D315..The Groove Ramjam
D325/326..Real Empathy(2)
D328/329..Red Dwarf (2)
D330..Darkness M/Demo
D332..Melted Experience
D333-337..Odyssey (5)
D340..Watchman Demo
D341..Anarchy Smoker Co
D342..Ed 209 The Revenge
D343/344..Hardwired (2)
D346..Wildfire M/Demo
D347..Mindwarp M/Demo
D348/349..Skizzo Demo(2)
D350-352..Treacle Team(3)
D358..Mr Men Stories
D359..Seeing Is Believing
D360..State Of The Art
D361..Mayday Resistance
D362/363..Jesus On E's (2)
D364..Fish Tank
D365..Optimum Pressure
D366..Mind Riot
D367..In The Can Demo
D368..Dynamic Illusions
D369..Piece Of Mind
D370..3D Demo 2
D371..Lethal Exit
D376..World of Commodore
D377..Claustraphobia
D380..Hoover Demo
D381..The Trip
D382/3..Project Techno (2)
D384..Interspace
D386..Mindwarp (AGA)
D387..Panta Rhei (AGA)
D388..Hysteria
D393-5..Grapevine 15 (3)
D396-8..Grapevine 16 (3)
D399-401..Grapevine 17 (3)
D402..In The Kitchen

UTILITIES

U1....Games Music Creator
U21...The Comms Disk
U32...Modem Utils
U34...Red Devils Utils 1
U35...Soundtracker Special
U38...Paint,Music,Media
U39...Card Designer
U41...Red Devils Utils 4
U43...Future Composer
U44...Kefrons Makeboot
U45...P.E Giant Utils 168
U47...Label Designer
U49...Ultimate Icon Disk
U50...Power Comp Utils
U51...Jazz Bench
U55...Visicalc
U57...Quickbench
U59...Font Designer
U60...D-Paint Fonts 1
U61...D-Paint Fonts 2
U62...Med 3.20
U63...Direct Anim Creator
U64...Crossword Designer
U66...CLI Help + Others
U67...S/Tracker Mega
U68...Ultimate Boots 1
U69...Ultimate Boots 2
U73...Powerlogo
U74...M-Cad
U75...Journal Home Acc's
U76...Home Utilities
U77...Electroquad
U78...Ami Base
U81...Bootbench V2.0
U82...Slideshow Maker
U83...Catalog Workshop 1
U84...Catalog Workshop 2
U87...Hard Disk Utils
U89-94...Amateur Radio (6)
U95...C-Light + Others
U96...GFX Utils 1
U100...Ham Lab
U101...Sid V2.0
U108...A-Gene
U113...Midi Utilities
U118/119...Video Utils (2)
U132...GFX Utils 2
U133/134...North C (2)
U136...CrossDoss (demo)
U138...Squid Squad Utils
U139...Terminalities V1.0
U140...Squash 1 (2.04 only)
U141...Squash 2 (2.04 only)
U142...Text Plus 3
U144...Demons Samples 1
U145...Digital Intro Design
U146...Viz Clip Art
U147...Spectrum Emulator
U151...Slipstream V/Killers
U152...Red Devils Utils 6
U154...Amigafox W/P
U155...P.D Utils Docs Disk
U163...Quickbench + (2.04)
U164...Rim Database
U166...Dennis's Hack Disk
U167...Demolisher Utils
U168...Home Business 3
U172...Squelch (1.3 only)
U176...GFX Utils 3
U177...Star Charts
U179-180...Dice (2)
U181...Celtic Demo Maker
U186-206...Track Ins 10-30
U207...Icon Collection 1
U208...Dave Jones Fonts 1
U211...Chemesthetics
U212...Animated Pointers
U213...Desk Top Publisher
U215...Messy Sid 2
U216...Master V/Killer 2.2
U218...Data Base Wizard
U223...Ten Pin Data Base
U224...Q-Base Data Base
U226...Games Solutions 1
U231...D-Paint Fonts 3
U235...Ami Cash V1
U238...Iconmania
U240...Icon Editor
U252...Opticomms 2.0
U254...New Superkillers 2
U255...Protracker v2.0
U256...Atari ST Emulator
U258...D-Copy 3
U262...PC Emulator
U273...Vidi Fonts 1
U274...Illinoi Labels
U275...600 Business letters
U279...Invoice Printer
U283...Headline Fonts
U289...Amos Updater
U290...Kickstart 2.0
U293...Black Tiger Utils 2
U294...Text Engine V4.0
U296...Ultimate Disk Crea
U297...10 PD Copiers
U298...Protracker V3.0
U299...Address Print V3.1
U303...Game Tamer
U308...Music Base V1
U309...PP Minicrunch
U311...Vmorph V2.30
U313...Pro Astrology
U314...Pools Wizard Jr
U319...Lister V2.1
U320...Garden Designer
U327...Bezier Surf
U329...Music Engine V3.4
U330...Starview
U331...X-Beat Pro
U332...Superview V2.4

GAMES

G1....Return To Earth
G2....Games comp 5
G3....Dizzy Lizzy
G4....Scum Haters
G5....Parachute Joust
G6....Frantic Freddie
G8....Twintris
G9....Psuedo Cop
G10...Drip
G11...Bug Bash
G12...Asteroids
G13...LLamatron
G14...Escape From Jovi
G15...Moria Adventure
G16...Ground Attack
G17...Megaball
G18...Insiders Club
G19...Various Adventures
G20...Battleforce
G22...Dragon Cave
G24...Rings Of Zon
G25...Mayhem
G26...Mechflight
G27...The Tennis Game
G28...Flaschbier
G29...Buck Rogers
G30...Greyslayer
G31...7-Tiles
G32...Mega Comp 1
G33-34...Star Trek 1 (2)
G35-37...Star Trek 2 (3)
G38-39...Mechforce (2)
G40...Klondyke
G42...Car
G43...Games Comp 2
G44...S.E.U.C.K. Games
G45...Sacc Games Comp
G46...Games Comp 3
G48...Rays Game Disk
G49...Games Comp 4
G50...Games Comp 6
G51-52...Trucking (2)
G53...Jetpac
G55...Quick And Silva
G56...Miniblast
G57...Lamer Game
G58...Games comp 7
G59...Games comp 8
G60...Pom Pom Gunner
G61...Cavernunner
G62...Crystal Caverns
G63...Intact
G64...Eternal Rome
G65...Lemmingoids
G66...DownHill Challenge
G67...Lame ST Ports
G68...Paranoid
G69...Puggles
G70...Chainsaw Death
G71...Pirate Pete's Treasure
G72...Serene 2
G73...Castles
G74...Dynamite Dick
G75...Card Games 1
G76...Wizzy's Quest
G77...Growth
G78...Skate
G79...Atic Atac
G80...Napoleonic Sim
G81...Project 1
G82...Lazer Zone
G83...Lemmings Pack
G84...Star Trek S.E.UP
G85...Lettrix
G87...Matched Pairs
G89...Snake Pit
G90...Zeus
G92...Blizzard
G93...The Maze Game
G94...Subculture
G95...Hollywood Trivia
G97...Shootout
G99...Holy Grail Adventure
G100...Amos Coindrop
G101...Classic Comp 1
G102...Card Games 2
G103...Super Skoda Chall
G104...Grand Prix Sim
G106...Computer Conflict 2
G107...Lemon X Raid 2
G108...NU Game
G110...Tricky + The Turn
G111...Marble Slide
G112...Games Comp 10
G113...Black Jack Lab
G114...Dungeon Of Madroj
G115...Amiga Columns
G116...Robocop In Iraq
G117...Mutant Camels
G120-122...Warlock (3)
G124...Bart Simpson
G126...Air Ace 2
G127...Breakout Con Kit
G128...Pipeline
G129...Dungeon Of Doridian
G132...Peters Quest
G133...Star Trek 3
G134...Piperider
G139...Door To Door
G143...Solid Quad
G144...Omega Race
G145...Mission X Raid 3
G146...Trek 73
G147...Wack In Wonderland
G148...Squats Revenge
G149...Sky Fight
G150...Wet Beaver
G151...Airmania
G152...Wizzard World
G154...Totally Frantic Quiz
G155...Chess V2.0
G156...Smash Telly
G159...Billy The Dragon
G160...I-Ching
G161...E-Type
G162...TomCat
G163...Sea Lance
G164...Dizzy Diamonds
G165...No Mans Land
G166...Word Square Solver
G167...Cross Fire
G168...Wastelands
G170...Space Blitz
G171...Crazy Sue
G172...Make A Break
G173...Squamble
G174...F-1 Challenge
G175...Othello
G178...Evil Dead Game
G179...Trainset
G180-181...P Comps 1+2
G182...Diplomacy
G183...Tractor Beam
G184...Motor Duel
G185...Game Boy Tetris 2
G186...Water Works
G187...Act Of War
G188...Mutants Games
G189-193...Timelords 1-5
G194...Nirvana
G195-196...Neighbours (2)
G197...Ameoba Invaders
G198...Game Boy Tetris 1
G199...Tetren
G200...Battlecars 2
G201...Dr Mario
G204...Ashido
G205...Cheats Disk 2
G206...Cheats Disk 3
G208...Airport
G209...F.R.A.C.
G210...The Golden Fleece
G211...Legend of Lothian
G212-214...Timelords 6-8
G215...Amos Games 1
G216...Super Sid
G217...Light Bikes
G218...Relayer
G219...Air Hockey
G220...Amos Child Quiz
G221...Texas Chainsaw
G222...Roulette
G223...Premier Pics
G224...Thrust Duel
G225...Wibble Giddy
G226...Super Pong
G227...Fruit Salad
G228...Brainbow
G229...Jeopard
G230...Superb Invasion
G231...Karate Worm
G232...Super League Manager
G233...PD City Comp 1
G234...Colour Changes
G235...Battle Of Britain
G236...Super Twintri
G237...Castle
G238...Numtris (+ Only)
G239...Kung Fu Charles
G241...Micro Market
G243...Blood Runner

S79...Freddies Dead
S80...Wendy James Slides
S81...The Invisible World
S82-83...Terminator 2 (2)
S84...Fantasy Pics
S85...Gulf War Slides
S86...Magical Pics
S88...Gulf War Tribute
S89-90...S/Thing Fishy (2)
S91...Eldorado Slides

SLIDES

S1...Ham Pics Show 1
S4...Madonna slides
S5...Moviestar slides
S6...Party Disaster
S8...Immaculate Collection
S9...Simpsons Slides
S10-11...Channel 42 (2)
S12...Bruce Lee Slides
S14...Adams Family
S15...Viz Mag Slides
S17...Docklands Jarre
S18...Dr Who Demo
S20...Nasa Slides
S22-24...WWF Slides (3)
S27...Demons Slides
S28...Total Recall
S29...Joe's Slides
S30...Ham Pics Show 2
S32...Neighbours Slides
S33...Roger Dean slides
S34...Iron Maiden Slides
S35-36...Tobias Richter (2)
S38...Basket case 2
S39...Eces Slides
S40...Fraxion Devine 2
S41...Fraxion Devine 1
S42...Golems Gate Slides
S43...Chainsaw Slippers
S44...Cry For Dawn
S45...Forgotton Realms (2)
S47...Kick Off 3 Slides
S48...PD Slideshow
S49-52...Terminator (4)
S53...Robocop 2 Slides
S54...Trackmaster Slides
S55...Forgotton Realms 2
S56...Garfield Slides
S57...Pawnbroker Slides
S58...Hellraiser Slides
S59...Night Breed Slides
S60...Raytracing
S61...Horror Slides
S70...Muscle Mania
S71...Creature Comforts
S72...The Wonder Years
S73...Watership Down
S75...Ferrari 348 Pics
S76...Belinda Carlisle
S77...Cher Slides

ANIMS

A1...Probe Sequence
A2...Ghost Pool
A3...Jogger + Magician 1
A4...Gymnast Demo
A5...Fractal Flight
A6...Basketball Demo
A8...Walker Demo
A9...Magician 2
A10...Pugs In Space
A11...Luxor Teenager
A13...Juggler Demo
A16...Cool Cougar
A17...Mono Cycle Anim
A18...Robocop Anim
A20...Mayhem On Wheels
A21...Jugette 2
A22...Shuttlecock Anim
A23...T-Pot Anim
A27...Fleet Manouvre
A28...Billiard Anim
A29...E/Prise Leaves Dock
A31...Starwars 2 Anim
A32...Fraxion revenge
A34...Madonna Anim
A35...Stealthy Anims 2
A36...Raiders Of The L/Ark
A37...Bugs Bunny Show
A38...Iraq V's UK Anim
A39...Mike Tyson anim
A42...Walker 2
A43...Walker 3
A45-46...Light Cycle (2)
A47...Exploding Head
A48...Police Car Chase
A49...Top Gun Demo
A50...Animators Demo
A51...5 Ways To Kill a Mole
A52...Another 5 Ways
A53...Batman The movie
A54...3D Spaceship
A55...Mr Potato Head
A59...Low Level Flight
A63...Amy V's Walker
A64...Real Pinball Anim
A66...Porky Pig Anim
A67...Adventures Of Chuck
A70-71...Max Overdrive (2)
A73...Spaceshuttle Anim
A74...Ghostbusters + Horse
A76...Alarm Anim
A77...Flight Anim
A78...Piano Anim
A79...Dart Anim
A80...Bad Bird Anim
A81...Holiday Anim
A82...Fillet The Fish
A85...Miners Anim
A86...Pocket Watch Anim
A90-93...The Movies 2 (4)
A95...My TinToy
A96...T-Pot 2 Anim
A99...Terminator 3
A100...Dolphin Dreams
A101/102...Thunderbirds (2)
A103...History of Amy
A104...Pogo Anim (2 Meg)

EDUCATION

E1...Education Pack 1
E2...Education Pack 2
E3...Education Pack 3
E4...Education Pack 4
E5...Education Pack 5
E6...Education Pack 6
E7...Educational Worlds 1
E8...Educational Games
E9...Math Drill
E10...Amiga Function Com
E11...Devware Ed Comp
E12...Simon Says + S Maths
E13...Kids Paint
E14...Storyland 2
E15...Colour It
E16...Colour The Alphabet
E17...D.T.P. For Children
E18...Algebra
E19...Amosagram
E20...Animal Land!
E21...Animal Sounds
E22...Military War Sounds
E23...Vehicles Sounds
E24/25...Read & Learn 1 (2)
E26...Junior Maths

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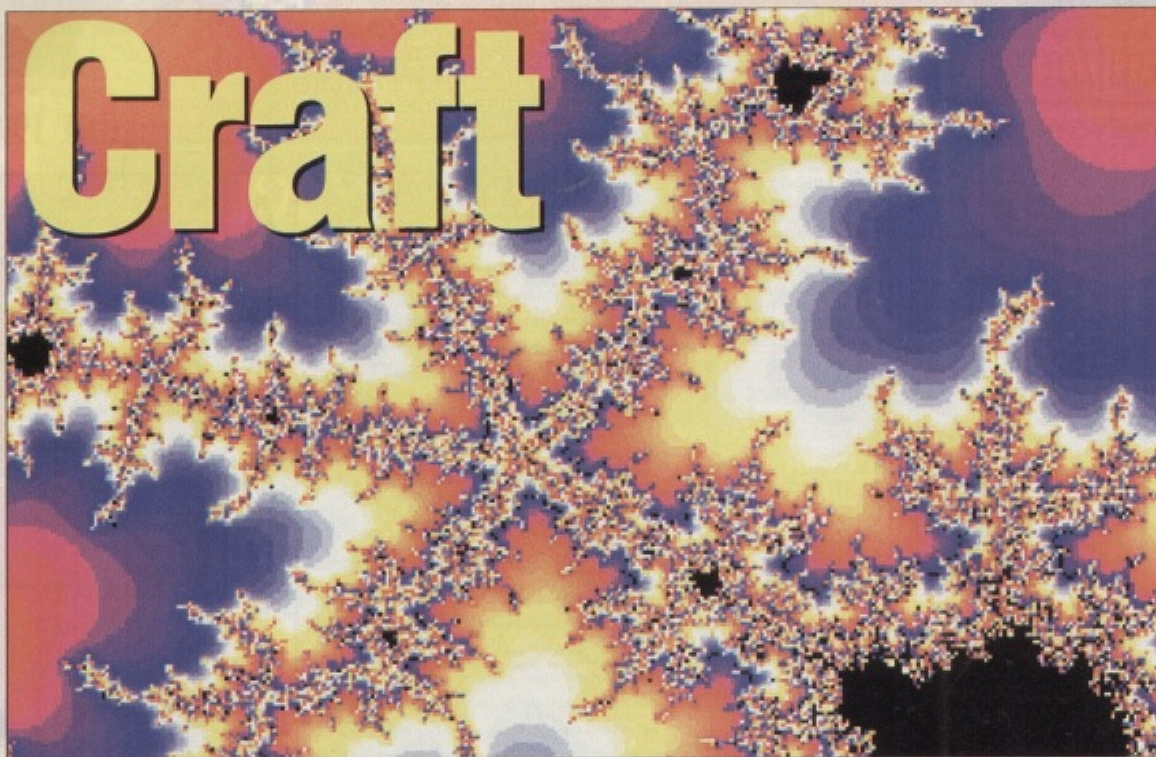


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Craft

Despite the recent popularity of *Blitz Basic 2*, AMOS still has its fair share of supporters. Dave Smithson examines Black Legend's new *Craft* AMOS extension.

The year 1993 was certainly something of an 'Annus Horribilis' (as the Queen would say) for Europress' AMOS programming language. With the arrival of Acid Software's *Blitz Basic 2* and Europress' inability to keep AMOS up to date with recent developments in the Amiga market, *Blitz*'s greater code performance and extended command set has been just too tempting for most AMOS owners, resulting in a mass-migration as Amiga users dumped their copies of AMOS in favour of Acid's more capable language.

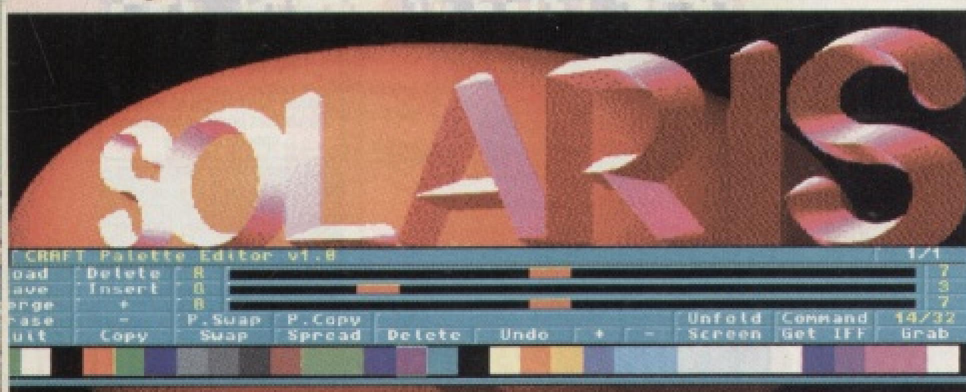
Rumour has it that Francois Lionet, the programmer of AMOS, is currently hard at work on both AGA and Intuition extensions for AMOS Professional that will allow programmers to bring their copies of AMOS bang up to date. Rumour also has it that Francois is even considering AMOS Professional version 3, although this seems highly unlikely. Until Francois does come up with the goods, however, owners can inject new life into their copies of AMOS thanks to Black Legend Software's new *Craft* extension. *Craft* is compatible with both AMOS Professional and AMOS 'Classic', although *Craft* doesn't work with Easy AMOS.

Before you can start using the addition commands that *Craft* has to offer, the two *Craft* '.lib' files that contain the *Craft* instructions have to be installed onto your AMOS System Disks. For those of you that break out in a sweat at the thought of such 'techie tasks', Black Legend kindly include a utility that does the job for you – all you have to do is to tell the installer what version of AMOS you have and it installs the files and then creates a disk packed with demonstration listings.

CRAFT WORK

Unlike most AMOS extensions, *Craft* is a 'multi-function' extension. That is, the new commands that it delivers cover a wide range of different aspects of programming. The name '*Craft* is actually a pseudonym for 'Colours, Requesters, Audio, Fractals and Turtle' which does give some indication of what *Craft* is capable of. Some of the areas that Craft addresses are somewhat obscure, to say the least - Craft provides direct support for Sound Tracker 'modules', for example, despite the fact that all versions of AMOS since 1.34 have supported them too. Solaris (the Finnish programmers of the program) claim that these commands were added to *Craft* before the release of version 1.34 of AMOS and so they simply decided to leave them in. In fairness to Solaris, however, *Craft*'s Sound Tracker support is better than Francois Lionet's commands and so they're still worth obtaining.

By far the most interesting aspect of *Craft* has to be its range of Fractal graphic commands. *Craft* includes all the commands you could possibly need to generate and then manipulate both Mandelbrot and Julia fractals. What's more, because *Craft*'s commands are written in pure assembly language, the program generates fractals considerably faster than even the fastest fractal generator written using AMOS' own instructions. A full range of additional commands are provided to allow you to move around and explore fractal graphics at your leisure. These commands produce some stunning images, but some form of fractal landscape commands would have possibly been more useful to most AMOS programmers.



Need a colour requester for your AMOS application? With Craft you could incorporate this powerful requester into your own program within minutes!

DESIGNER LOGO

Craft also adds a full range of 'Turtle' graphics commands similar to those found in the 'Logo' programming language. The basic concept behind Turtle graphics is that instead of drawing lines and boxes relative to the top left-hand corner of the screen, you draw onto the screen by writing control programs for an invisible turtle that works not unlike the 'BigTrack' toy that used to be so popular a few years back (remember that one!). To draw a box, for example, you'd tell the turtle to move forward and then draw a line of a fixed length, move left and then draw another line, left again and so on until all four sides of the box were drawn. It's a strange concept, but very easy to get used to.

Sound Tracker 'mod' file support is now an integral part of AMOS but *Craft*'s Sound Tracker commands are a cut above the rest. Most importantly, Craft's commands don't take over the entire sound system, so you're free to play samples whilst a Sound Tracker module is being played which is ideal for adding sound tracks to games. *Craft* also adds two new forms of requester to AMOS – a Guru-like 'Recoverable Alert' and a very useful 'OK/Cancel' style requester. Bundled with *Craft* are also full source code for a number of other requester types including a fully featured colour requester. Adding these to your own programs is reasonably easy.

CONCLUSION

Craft certainly isn't the language extension that answers every criticism ever levelled at AMOS, but it's certainly a step in the right direction. It may lack many of the more obvious features that AMOS users are screaming out for – Intuition and AGA support being just two – but Solaris have made it clear that this is only the first of many *Craft* extensions. If *Craft* becomes a success, Solaris will produce upgrades complete with commands that cover user's own suggestions. In the meantime, however, *Craft*'s already impressive array of commands is just too tempting to miss, especially at such a low price. If you're serious about your AMOS coding, then you'd be a fool to miss *Craft*. CU

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EASE OF USE 82%
Installing Craft can be a bit frustrating but once it's done, Craft's commands are immediately accessible.

VALUE FOR MONEY 92%
160 new AMOS commands for the price of a game? Can't be bad!

DOCUMENTATION 82%
Every single Craft command is explained in a very readable manual.

FLEXIBILITY 85%
Craft's choice of topics is rather strange, but most of the commands are very useful indeed.

"For all AMOS users, Craft is just too good to miss."

OVERALL 86%

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Warm Up Time	33 secs	25 secs	<60 secs	60 secs	45 secs
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Flash ROM	-	-	-	-	YES
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Scaleable Resident Fonts - in HP LJ III Emulation	0	8	0	8	8
Resident Bit-Mapped Fonts	10	14	2	14	14
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Able to print on OHP Film	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
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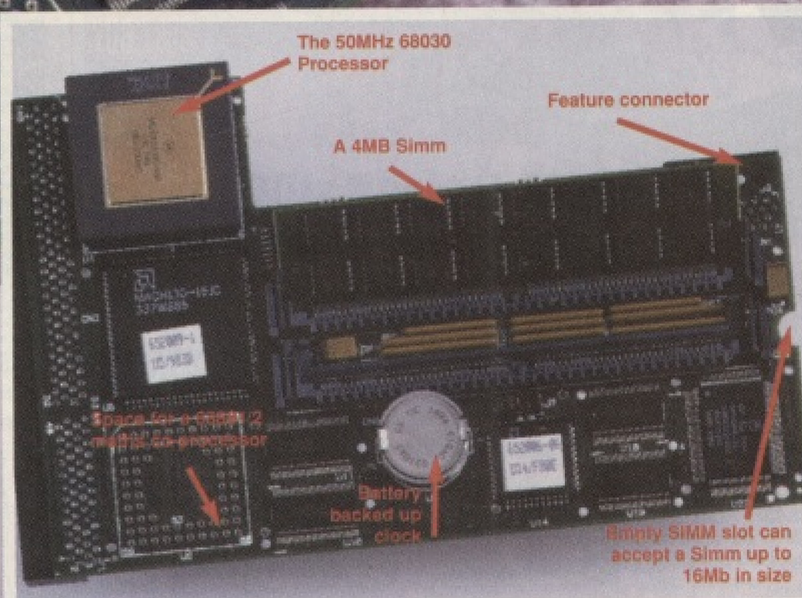
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A1230 TURBO PLUS PERFORMANCE SERIES II



Competition to offer the best A1200 upgrade has become fierce. GVP were first to strike with the A1230 Turbo, and now after less than a year, they're hitting back with an altogether more impressive piece of kit. Mat Broomfield opens up his A1200 yet again.

Yet again GVP shows why it has a reputation for ground-breaking innovation and is the largest third party supplier of Amiga peripherals in the World. The A1230-II is the most expandable A200 peripheral yet.



GVP have a reputation for innovation and they've now turned their thoughts to the challenge of producing the ultimate Amiga 1200 upgrade. The problem with the A1200 is that you can only add one internal expansion board. The computer's chips are all surface mounted (soldered to the circuit board) so you can't start removing them and adding new ones like you could with the A500 or A2000. That means that if you want to add an upgrade board to the computer, you either have to buy the ultimate upgrade in the first place, or you must resign yourself to having to trash the board you do buy when subsequent ones arise. At the moment, possible upgrades include RAM cards, maths co-processor boards, SCSI cards, accelerators and even an Ethernet board. It's common to find that manufacturers offer two or even three of these options on a single card, with the most common being a RAM and maths co-pro combo.

JACK OF ALL TRADES

Like CSA before them, GVP have tried to produce an expansion that is all things to all men. Whereas CSA's 12-Guage board included an accelerator, Maths co-pro, and SCSI 1 and 2 interface, with optional RAM and Ethernet add-ons, GVP have taken a more modest approach which, to a certain extent, puts more choice in the hands of the user.

Their boards comprise of an accelerator. However, you can again add a maths co-pro and RAM, and you can also add a SCSI controller. But that's not all as there's far more to this device than meets the eye...

The board's full name is the GVP A1230 Turbo Plus Performance Series II, the A1230-II for short! It comprises a large PCB that plugs into the expansion slot beneath the A1200. Although it is easy enough to fit, once in place there's not a millimetre of spare space in the expansion slot.

A JUNGLE OUT THERE

The PCB is a jungle of components, many of which use VLSI, a manufacturing technique that GVP are exceptionally good at. VLSI stands for Very Large Scale Integration. It's a buzzword (buzz-acronym?!) that describes a way of squeezing huge amounts of components onto relatively small computer chips by using state-of-the-art miniaturisation techniques. Because GVP manufacture their own chips, they are able to invest in the equipment capable of this degree of miniaturisation, which in turn means that they can produce more complicated and more feature-packed equipment than most of the opposition.

Anyway, back to the board, this jungle of components includes a full 68030 processor chip, running at a jaw dropping 50MHz. This is the same as the processor used in the CSA 12-Guage and, of course, produces comparably impressive results. In fact, the only thing faster than this is an A4000 '040. Because GVP have opted for a full 68030, as opposed to the 68EC030 chip found in both their A1230 and A530 accelerators, you'll also be able to take advantage of the built in MMU if you own software that uses it.

Near the processor is a slot for a maths co-processor (sometimes called an FPU). If you do a lot of maths intensive work such as ray tracing or fractal generation, you can use this slot to add a 68881 or 68882 co-pro which will speed up this sort of work.

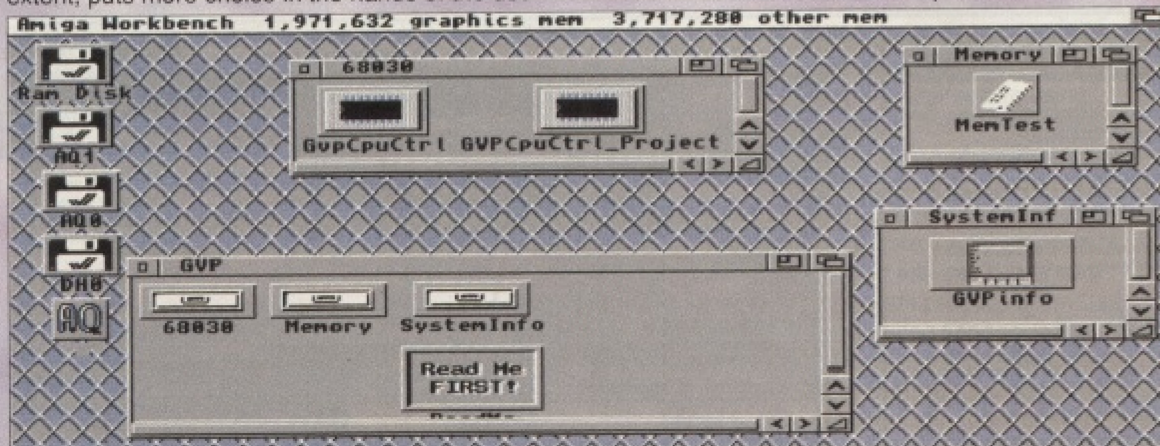
Also on the PCB are two SIMMS slots via which you can add up to 32 very expensive megabytes of 32-bit RAM. The SIMMs that you must use are GVP's proprietory ones which are

WHAT USE IS AN MMU

An MMU or Memory Management Unit to use its full name, is a part of the processor which controls the rate of flow of information in and out of the chip, ensuring that none gets back-logged. Although it is not used by most software, and doesn't yield dramatic improvements on the performance of the chip, it is an absolute requirement for two very popular pieces of up-market software.

The first program is *GigaMEM* a program that lets hard drive owners turn their drives into Virtual RAM. This means that as far as the computer's concerned, your hard drive has just been turned into additional RAM. This is ideal when you're dealing with 24-bit images that can easily occupy ten or more megabytes of memory.

The other program is called *Enforcer* and it's a serious programmer's tool which is used for detecting and trapping certain types of memory allocation error which might otherwise cause a program to crash.



The board is supplied with the usual GVP disk of utilities. These can be used for diagnostic and configuration purposes.

```
Workbench Screen
GVP_RAM_Test
GVP's RAM/Memory Test Utility
        February, 1993
==============================
If you have a lot of FAST RAM
this may take a while...
------------------------------
Testing FAST-RAM:
Working...
$200000 to $60ffff
```

The board can support up to 32 Mb of RAM, although the 16 Mb SIMMs required to reach the upper limit are monstrously expensive. To get the best performance out of the board you absolutely *must* have some RAM, and four megs is a sensible minimum.

CHOICES, CHOICES

The A1230-II comes in numerous configurations to suit every pocket. At the bottom of the line there's a 40MHz version that uses a 68EC030 processor which doesn't include an MMU. Although this is £130 cheaper than the equivalent 50MHz version, I would not recommend it simply because you never know what requirements future software will have.

Still, at only £249, it offers the cheapest power-for-price ratio of any accelerator on the Amiga market, and is ideal if you only use your A1200 for a bit of art, maybe a little DTP or word processing or even some music. And, of course, it does mean that those of you on a tight budget will be able to sample the joys of acceleration too.

At the top of the line is the 50MHz accelerator with the full 68030 processor and MMU. It comes populated with 8Mb of 32-bit RAM, although it doesn't include an FPU. This is apparently because 50MHz FPUs are still relatively new, and Silica have yet to decide on a suitable supplier or price point for them.

comparably priced with other types, but cannot be plugged into other SIMM-using computers if you ever change machines. On the plus side, any of you who already own GVP SIMMs such as those found in the HD8+ and A530 Turbo hard drives, can simply remove them from the older peripherals and plug them into this card.

CONNECTIVITY

The basic system is impressive: a full 68030 accelerator running at 50MHz, with space for 32Mb of 32-bit RAM and a maths co-processor. However, this is the really innovative bit: the A1230-II includes a special feature connector to which you can add a 16-bit direct-to-disk sound sampler, a SCSI card or a real-time video digitiser.

The connector comes in the form of a slot on the board. This slot can be accessed via the blanking plate at the back right-hand side of your Amiga. Remove the plastic cover and you can slide peripherals in and attach them directly to the A1230-II's board. At the moment there's only one peripheral available, a SCSI card that allows your A1200 to support up to seven SCSI devices such as hard drives, tape streamers and even CD-ROM drives (not the CD32 drive though).

GVP are confidently promising that there will be at least two additional peripherals available by the first quarter of next year. To be honest, they made predictions about the availability of mini-slot peripherals for the HD8 and A530 Turbo hard drives, but apart from a PC emulator, the other promised extras never materialised. Mind you, to be charitable, they do seem to have these A1230-II peripherals already designed, it's simply a matter of production and packaging.

CONCLUSION

On its own, the A1230-II is a nice enough unit. It doesn't come with the SCSI connector that the 12-Guage includes, but it's about £50 cheaper. The really unique thing about this card is its expandability. Whilst you can add an Ethernet card to the CSA 12-guage, the A1230-II lets you add a SCSI card, 16-bit sampler and a graphics digitiser, although no more than one at a time I'm afraid. Still, it looks like being the neatest way for A1200 owners to get into 16-bit sampling, and may even help to establish a long overdue 16-bit sample standard on the Amiga.

If sampling and digitising aren't important to you, then I still think that the CSA 12-Guage is the better buy. If they are, or if you own GVP SIMMs already, this is a very exciting option at a reasonable price. The fact that you don't have to invalidate your warranty in order to use the SCSI add-on is a big bonus. CU

The A1230-II is designed to be expandable. This 79 SCSI card is already available and 16-bit samplers and real time graphics digitisers are planned for early next year.

```
GvpInfo 1.39
Boards
Chips
Drives
Memory
Quit  About  Help  Refresh
Get   Main   Next  Prev
Ctrl_Project
Memory  MemTest
SystemInf  System Info  GVPinfo
Read Me FIRST!
```

GVPInfo is one of the diagnostic programs supplied with the board. Ironically, it doesn't detect the presence of an MMU even though it's there! Fortunately, this is the only part of the package which is not up to scratch, although the manual is a bit minimal.

JARGON BUSTERS

- Accelerator: A computer upgrade (usually a card or board) that increases the speed at which the computer works.
- Co-pro : Short for Maths Co-Processor.
- Ethernet card: A card for the Amiga which allows you to link it to a network of other computers (either Amigas or PCs).
- FPU: Floating Point Unit. Another expression for Maths Co-Processor.
- Graphics digitiser: A device for converting a video signal taken from a camera, VCR or other similar source, and converting it into a digital format that can be manipulated and stored on the computer.
- Maths Co-processor: An optional chip that is used specifically for maths operations in a computer. Doesn't give much of an overall speed increase, but can improve certain operations drastically.
- MHz: Megaherz. A speed rating used in this context to specify the speed of a chip.-The higher the number the faster the chip can process data. Usual figures on the Amiga range between 7.14 (for a bog standard A500) up to 50 for the A1230-II.
- PCB: Printed Circuit Board.
- Processor: The main chip in a computer. The 'engine' that does the work. The faster the processor, the faster the computer. On the Amiga, processors range from the 68000 on the A500, A600 , A1500 and A2000 up to the the 68040 found in the A4000 '040 (and some dedicated A2000/3000 accelerator cards).

  Higher numbered processors do not necessarily run faster in electrical terms than lower ones, but they have more efficient data processing and so the end result is a speed increase in processor power. For example, it's possible to have a 25MHz 68040 chip that would run rings around a 50MHz 68020.
- SCSI: Small Computer Systems Interface. A standard interface for connecting peripherals (usually storage devices of some sort) to a computer and each other.
- Sound Sampler: A device for converting real sounds into a digital format which can be manipulated and stored on the computer.
- Video digitiser: See graphics digitiser.
- Speeding along: Using the latest version of Sysinfo, the 50MHz A1230-II rates as being 12.70 times faster than a standard A600, whilst the 40MHz version still manages a respectable 10.09 fold speed increase.

GVP £249 upwards

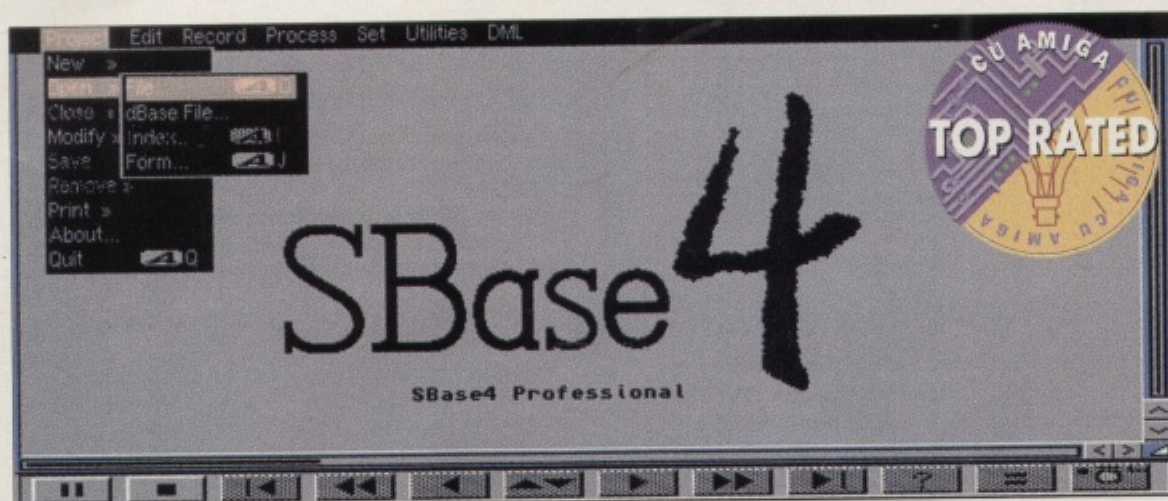
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VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
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EFFECTIVENESS	99%
Look out sound barrier, here I come!	
FLEXIBILITY	99%
Does everything you want, and some things you didn't even know you wanted.	
INNOVATION	97%
GVP doing well what GVP does best!	

“Impeccable pedigree. Impeccable product.”

OVERALL 97%



Left:The opening screen showing the video-style controls which let you skip through the records at lightning speed.

SBASE 4 Professional

Sbase 4 Professional **is the latest database from Oxxi with all sorts of bells and whistles. Darren Irvine takes a look.**

Why read this article? It just doesn't sound interesting does it? Database. No – even the word is boring, conjuring up visions of rows of civil service workers endlessly keying in mind-numbingly tedious facts in triplicate, or train spotters meticulously transferring reams of drivel from Tizer-stained notebooks to their Archimedes.

"Databases? No fear, I'm strictly a Sim City man myself", you may think, but surely there's something around the house that might benefit from a bit of organisation. How about your CD collection? You know how it is – when you're desperate for a quick fix of 2 Unlimited's seminal and deeply spiritual "No Limits", and you can't remember which volume of "Now that's what I call Complete rip-off Energy Dance type Thing" it's on.

Of course you could buy the single but how about a program that you can run on your trusty Amiga, which could provide instant information on any CD in your collection, displaying the CD cover and even playing a snippet of every track (not that I'm recommending that you do this because it would probably be, you know, sort of illegal).

OPTIONS

If you want to use a database to store data for a simple application, such as a CD collection, you probably won't need all the features offered by *SBase 4 Pro*. Luckily, Oxxi also produce a version of the software without the DML language or *ARexx* support for half the price (£107 + VAT).

If, on the other hand you need to develop a commercial database that will run on multiple Amigas, the developers extension (£286 + VAT) includes a run-time version of the program, enabling users to run your database application, but not change your program themselves.

Enter *SBase 4 Professional* which could be the answer to these problems, and a whole lot more.

WHAT IS A DATABASE?

A database is simply a way of organising and storing two or more pieces of related information (data) in such a way that a specific piece of data can easily be retrieved. Apart from simple home uses such as cataloguing CD and disk collections, many businesses can be run with little more than a decent database program, and perhaps only a wordprocessor for correspondance.

The basic idea is that you decide on all the details of a particular subject you want to store (each detail being referred to as a "Field"), and choose a screen layout to use for inputting the data (called a "Form"). A collection of different fields is called a "record". For instance, an address database may contain fields called "Name", "Address", "PhoneNo." and so on. One person's complete address details form a single record, and collectively, your entire collection of addresses are known as a database or file.

SOME TECHNICAL BITS

SBase 4 Professional is a rewritten version of the *Superbase* database which has been around for some time on the Amiga, the ST and even the PC. It's a fully featured relational database management system that comes complete with it's own controlling Database Management Language or DML. It's not to be confused with *SBase 4 Personal*, which doesn't have the DML system.

Anyone who fell.asleep during that last paragraph will be relieved to find out that although jargon and acronyms are de rigueur when dealing with databases, the actual ideas behind them are fairly simple and the technical terms were invented to bore people with at parties.

Because most of your database activity will involve performing repetitive tasks suchs as adding new records, or searching through or modifying existing ones, the program's writers have thoughtfully provided a video recorder style control panel containing a number of buttons. The panel appears at the bottom of the screen, and provides even the most technophobic user with a relatively familiar and reassuring interface. Familiar controls like fast-forward (which skips through a database so that you can quickly go to particular records) or Play (which displays the current record) are available. This is a highly intuitive, and speedy way of accessing a database which may contain hundreds, if not thousands of records.

The order in which records are arranged in a database is defined by an Index. This is a special list which contains all items in the index field and can be arranged in alphabetical or numerical order. The records in any *SBase 4* file may be indexed by any field or combination of fields, and up to 999 indexes may be defined. It's up to you to decide which fields would make the best index.

SBase 4 Pro also comes with its own integrated text editor, which means you don't have to leave your database to access it. If you already have your own preferred editor, ASCII files can be imported to form the basis for things like mail merge letters, Form headings or any other text required by your database applications. The editor has full cut and paste functions to simplify the inclusion of 2 Unlimited song lyrics.

FIELDS, FILES, FORMS

When you define a database you can define fields of many different types, from simple text or numerical information to fields derived by calculations performed upon other fields.

Fields can be automatically checked against records in other files , providing you with an easy way of validating any input. For example, you may have a database detailing your monthly expenditures, so you might have a validation of total outgoings against another database containing your bank details, so you won't overdraw your account. (at least not without knowing about it!)

Complex calculations can be performed on any number of fields in a file (and indeed can include any number of fields from any other open files), allowing a great deal of user-control over the integrity of the data which is stored – very important if you're using a database for serious purposes.

BUT SERIOUSLY

Another way of looking at the relationship between different files is to consider an order-processing type application. If you ran a small business supplying widgets to the specialist widget market, you would have a file containing the details of all your suppliers, and another file containing the details of all your customers. These two files would be fairly static and are alternatively known as "Tombstone" or "Master" files.

In addition to these, you would have an order file, which would contain many records for every entry in your customer file. All the details for the customer would not need to be re-entered in each record of the order file, with only a relational field such as a customer number required to link in the details already stored on the customer master file.

INSIDE THE DATABASE

A database consists of one or more files, each split into individual records. These records, which could be the details about a customer in a business database for example, are made up of individual 'fields'.

An example of a field would be a name or an address and the way these fields are grouped together is described by a 'form' – think of one of those horribly 'friendly' government forms we all need to fill in from time to time. The blank boxes where you have to try and remain honest whilst writing in are the 'fields'.

The form is a user-definable screen layout which incorporates the screen location and format of any of the fields from the file or files which you wish to display or update, along with any text or graphics that you wish to have displayed.

As well as allowing for simple databases, *SBase 4 Pro* allows the user to produce mail merges from the addresses or any other fields stored in the database: for example to produce labels. The database can be composed of only one file, but any complex system can only be made efficient (or, in fact, operational in the case of applications requiring look-up tables) by utilising more than one file at a time.

The forms that you define are not just restricted to having text based input. Additionally you can include in your design, standard Amiga-type control mechanisms ie. Radio-buttons for multiple-choice entry situations and Check-boxes for yes/no flags. The Amiga function keys are also user-definable and can be set up to perform a different function for any database or form you require.

FEATURES

I have used a fairly wide variety of databases and 4GL (4th generation language) products on a variety of different platforms, such as *Recital* on VAX mini-computers, *Dataflex* on Unix boxes, *DBase III* on the PC and many more. *Sbase* has all the features found in these products and additionally supports some fairly impressive Amiga-specific features.

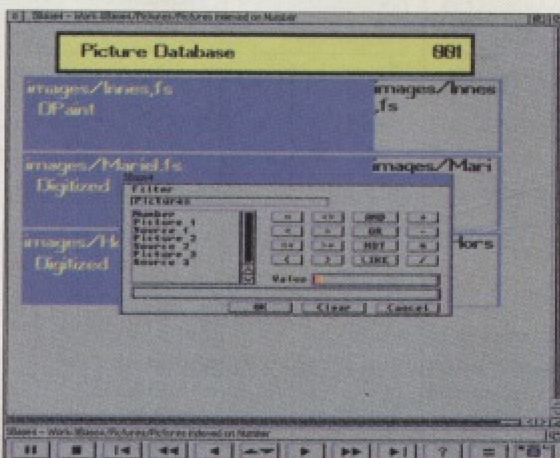
For instance, database fields can be defined as external files, so you can attach a wide range of external objects to your database file. Sound samples can be included along with any IFF, PCX or GIF graphic file, including 256 colour images that make use of the AGA chipset. Even more impressive is the ability to define an external field to be an ANIM file. In this case, the first frame of the Anim is displayed as part of the standard screen form, but the complete Anim can be played on a full screen by holding down the shift key and clicking on the field on the form. Given enough memory and hard disk space, this option should make possible a database to satisfy anyone.

TALK TO ME.

So you've created your database with all the data nicely cross-checked. Presumably now you want to retrieve some information from it. The first way of doing this is to use the video-controls to scan the file until you find the record that you seek. Alternatively, and more useful in the long term, you can make use of *SBase 4 Pro*'s extremely powerful report generator. You can define reports containing data from any number of related files, and produce them in any order you might reasonably require. Reports can include totals, sub-totals and sub-headings in any combination.

The mechanism for defining a report is very similar to that used in the form designer, and reported objects can be text, fields, calculations or functions. Features such as Mean, Variance, and standard deviation are also supported. Additionally, there are options for various levels of titles and summary pages.

One of the most powerful features of the report generator is its ability to create a DML program which you can modify to produce complete reporting applications. This sort of feature is great for convincing people (who don't know better) that you're a really quick and accurate programmer.



The title page of a picture database, with a filter requester open. AGA 256 colour support is new in SBase 4

THE INS AND OUTS

As well as standard Amiga files, *SBase 4 Pro* can import and export a vast range of files from other programs and from other hardware platforms. These range from simple ASCII files, through .DBF files produced by *DBase* and *Enable*, to files produced by spreadsheets such as *Lotus123* and Microsoft *Excel*. Additionally, if you use *DBase III* applications on a PC you can access the databases that it produces directly, without modification from *SBase 4 Pro*.

SBase 4 Pro is also *ARexx* compatible, allowing manipulation of any similarly-endowed Amiga application. The program has built in telecommunications facilities, with support for the Xmodem, Xmodem CRC or WXmodem protocols.

DESIGN IS EVERYTHING.

To make an application efficient and successful, it is vital to plan everything out at the start, and carefully define all the fields you might need, avoiding unnecessary duplication. The *SBase* manual is surprisingly useful covering basics as well as more arcane aspects of database design. In addition to an "Up and running in 15 minutes" section, the manual has tutorials to help you with more complex features available. In fact, the manual is one of my favourite things about this package. Occasionally you come across a piece of software that's probably really good, but due to a combination of a required steep learning curve, and a really useless manual, you just can't get into it, and many of the program's useful features go unused. *SBase 4 Pro*'s manual on the other hand does the one thing so rarely found in technical documentation – it actually makes you want to use the program.

NO LANGUAGE BARRIER

Despite all the features on the menu-driven Form designer and associated features, there will come a time when you need just a little more control over your data. In this case, a lot more power and control has been provided in the form of the Database Management Language. The DML is a superset of BASIC, expanded to include all the necessary database-manipulation commands, and so if you are familiar with BASIC in any form, you should have a head-start when it comes to using DML.

There's a separate manual for the DML language which is also most useful, and includes examples. One of these is a complete Trading application, which you can customise. One slight grimace with the manual is its occasional tendency to slip into Microsoft Windows terminology (an earlier, release of the *SuperBase* product is still available on that platform), ie. referring to the Workbench as the"Desktop".

DML contains over 200 functions and commands, all of which can be run instantly from a command line as well as from within a program. You can also create hybrid applications that DML programs from within standard Forms, or Forms that call DML routines to handle particularly complex calculations. A run time version of *SBase 4* Pro is available so that you can market applications written with DML. You can even use *SBase 4* Pro's modem support to write DML applications to allow unattended file transfers.

CONCLUSION

This is a fully featured professional database, with all the features you might ever need. In fact, writing commercial database systems is entirely possible, which should breath some life into the 'serious software' starved Amiga market.

It isn't always the quickest program you'll ever see, but of course it depends upon which model of Amiga you run it. There simply isn't any real competition, and given the flexibility of the system provided by its multi-layered control systems, I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to anyone needing a database for the Amiga.

JARGON BUSTERS

- **4GL: A 4th generation language – common on PCs to allow non- programming users to write their own applications. We have *HyperBook*, *Cando* and HELM.**
- **DML: Database Management Language – a super-set of the BASIC programming language, which can be used to control every aspect of the database.**
- **Field: A single item of information: a name or telephone number. In *SBase 4*, a field can also be a picture, sound sample or Anim.**
- **Form: The on-screen arrangement of fields specific to a particular database is defined in a form.**
- **RDBMS: Relational Database Management System - relational means several separate files can share information and rules.**

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EASE OF USE 90%
The user interface is very intuitive helped by a useful manual

VALUE FOR MONEY 80%
Quite a reasonable price, especially when compared to similar products on the PC.

EFFECTIVENESS 96%
Does everything you could need from a database and more.

FLEXIBILITY 90%
With its DML and ARexx support, you won't be stuck for things to do.

INNOVATION 92%
Not an original concept, but touches like AGA and ANIM support add a touch of class.

> *Essential for those needing to manipulate a large amount of data in meaningful way.*

OVERALL 90%

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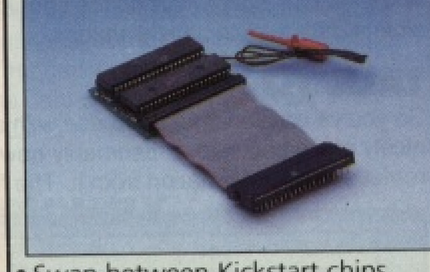
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Left: Some Power Tools in operation (protective eyewear required). Notice that each track can now have miniature keyboard. The polygraph is a check for MIDI overload.

BARS and Pipes

Music and plumbing had little in common before *Bars and Pipes*. John Kennedy looks at the latest in add-ons for this most unusual of MIDI sequencers.

As music sequencers go, *Bars and Pipes* is certainly unique. For the icon-driven user interface to the DIY plumbing system for MIDI information, its a program that stands alone in the world of music sequencing.

When Blue Ribbon were designing *Bars and Pipes*, flexibility was the word that was high on the list of the priorities, which is why they placed so much emphasis on 'tools'.

In *B&P* speak, a tool is an icon you can drag into the flow of MIDI information. The tool will process the data stream, and pass the output on to one or more other pipes. For example, an Echo tool would accept in-coming notes and generate two or three more after a specified time delay. Since the tools don't necessarily make any permanent changes to the music tracks, adding and removing different effects is very easy.

Blue Ribbon have produced extra lots of new tools, which they dutifully stuck on floppy disks and turned into two new expansion packs for existing users.

These additional tools can be installed by simply dragging thier icons into the tools drawer in your Bars and Pipes directory. Select 'install' form the tools menu and they're ready to use.

POWER TOOLS

The first collection is the wittily named 'Power tools' set, designed for dedicated Bars and Pipers. It contains 21 new tools, although some are more useful than others. The complete list is given elsewhere, but the ones I've used most often are: Autoharp (great for quick tests), DataBeep (for tracing MIDI leads), OffBeat (just fab with percussion), Pandemonium (awesome with long sustained chords), Polygraph (for predicting the limits of the One Stop Music Shop card) and Transport (a handy little window strip to have around).

The kit offers some useful additions to Bars and Pipes Pro, but I suspect you will need to be well into rack-fulls of MIDI gear to get the best from this pack. That said, the OffBeat and Pandemonium tools are now in all my tracks, and my set-up is hardly state of the art.

PERFORMANCE TOOLS

If I were going to appear in public with Bars and Pipes, this add-on would be handy. The first tool is probably the most useful – BigPatch displays a huge window with the current Patch Number displayed. It should be seen all the way across the stage, which means you need never start your keyboard Sax solo with the drumkit still accidentally installed ever again.

Other intelligent additions include a ConPresser (which can simulate a real compressor), a Keyboard Splitter and several others which make embarrassing keypresses more unlikely to happen when playing live. The OnTime tool will even make sure you are keeping up with the rest of the band.

In the studio, the extra effects (Super-8 and Rotate) can make some very sophisticated sounds, like stereo panning perfectly on-time drum rolls. As a ham-fisted one-finger keyboard player, these tools are a great help to me.

CONCLUSION

Both packs contain genuinely useful tools, so I'm afraid your only option is to buy both. You will need to be using *Bars and Pipes Professional v2*, but I'm sure you will have realised that by now. Besides, no other Amiga sequencing software comes close to offering this level of control, and I doubt any ever will.

POWER TOOLS

1. AlterNote: translate one note into another, with random offset if required. Good when used with drum tracks.
2. AutoHarp: produces a miniature keyboard for quickly creating notes with the mouse.
3. Conductor: converts note messages to control changes – use this to mute different tracks with different keypresses for example.
4. ControlTime: delays or advances data by a preset time defined by a MIDI controller – the pitch bender for example.
5. DataBeep: flashes the screen whenever certain MIDI data is present. Useful for debugging complicated MIDI setups.
6. Guitar String Filter: predicts where a note would be played if a guitar were used, allowing different voices and effects to be triggered for each.
7. Not!: removes or splits notes depending on where in the beat they occur.
8. Offbeat: changes the rhythmic character of a track – great for hi-hats and snares.
9. Pandemonium: random re-positions notes in the stereo field.
10. PlayTime: delay or advance notes by a preset value.
11. Polygraph: a tool for analysing MIDI information to ensure your multitimbral synth isn't becoming over loaded.

12,13 Receiver & Transmitter: used to send data between pipes.

14. Skip: cause data to 'jump' over tools,
15. SuperStop: shut off all hanging notes.
16. Swing: add a human feel to a track.
17. Thin: strips MIDI events from the music.
18. Transport : adds a small transport control window.
19. VeloDoc: adds more control over the velocity of notes.
20. VeloFade: create smooth transitions on velocity.
21. VeloMap: a graphical aid to velocity mapping.

PERFORMANCE TOOLS

1. Big Patch: display current patch setting in BIG window.
2. BreakAway: selectively re-directs notes.
3. ConPresse: simulate an audio compressor.
4. Drone: lock a note - for example, add a Kick drum when you play bass notes.
5. Filter MX: strip certain MIDI events.
6. ForceChord: force all notes into chord and so remove all slipped fingers.
7. Keyboard Split MX: up to 128 different splits.
8. Layer: add several notes to one key, with velocity sensitive effects.
9. Level MX: programmable volume control.
10. Modulator MX: programmable modulation control.
11. MonoPhoney: fake a mono-synth.
12. Not Again: tops instant repetition of notes.
13. One Note Out: only play one note, no matter what key - handy for entering drum parts.
14. OnTime: displa y timing information.
15. PatchMap: replaces one patch change with another.
16. PluckDuck: creates a plucked string effect.
17. Remote Patch MX: send patch changes from a remote keyboard.
18. Rotate: stores a sequence of 8 notes for each root key.
19. Simple Simon: mouse controlled control changes.
20. Super-8: arpeggiator with control of panning and volume.

MERIDIAN DISTRIBUTION £39.99 each

✓ Works on all Amigas which have Bars and Pipes Pro v2 running.

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A163 **BAIT MASKING** - Another brilliant cartoon from Eric Schwartz. •REQUIRES 1.5 MEGABYTES•
U314 **OCTAMED TUTOR** - Still having problems with using Octamed. Well follow this comprehensive course and master the music sequencer and become a master composer!
D164 **AGATHA** - Decent AGA demo with good use of the plasma routine. •A1200 ONLY•
G283/284/285 (3 DISKS) **KLONDIKE AGA** - The popular card game with a touch of AGA? Each card displays a 256 colour picture of a glamourous lady. Looks great. •A1200 ONLY• •YOU MUST LOAD THIS GAME THROUGH WORKBENCH•
D165 **SMELLS LIKE CHANEL No.5** - Fantasically long demo. •A1200 ONLY•
U315 TERMINUS 2.0C - Latest update to this supreme communications package. Pulls the maximum CPS from your modem.
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G289 **MARKSMAN** - Trojan Light Phazer game. Or use your mouse. Operation wulf type of game.
D168 **DREAM TRIPPING** - This demo not only takes over your Amiga, your TV set too!!!!
D169 **SUBTLE SHADES** - Massive demo that goes on and on. •NOT A500•
D170 **HOW TO SKIN A CAT** - Nothing to worry the RSPCA, but a decent demo all the same. Enhanced for A1200 users.
D171 **EXTENSION** - The hottest demo this month. Recently given a rave review in **CU AMIGA.**
S100 **AGA FERRARI** - Disk packed 256 colour hand drawn Ferrari cars, interiors, and parts. Very good. •A1200 ONLY•
U318 **BLITZ BLANKER** - Superb screen blanker written in Blitz Basic, loads of options. Includes source code.
U319/320/321 (3 DISKS) **MEGA ANSI** - Hundreds of Ansi art pictures on three disks. Includes ansi viewer.
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U322 **ADVANCED AMIGA ANALYZER** - Incredible Amiga diagnosis programme. Runs self tests on chips, all the Amiga's ports and even your disk drives. All your hardware is tested and loads of information is displayed. Every Amiga owner should have this.
M142 **GASTRIC ULCER** - Rave and techno tracks with plasma graphics. Turn the light out. •NOT A500•
U323 **FOOTY v1.1** - Dedicated football league database. Enter the weeks results to keep an up to date league tables. Also provides statistical data and match predictions. Full featured.
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E68 **KIDS DISK 2** - Maths Maze, Beat Sheets (music creator) and Shape Sorter. Three more superb kids educational games from Duncan Moran, the author of Colour the Alphabet 2.

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U261 **ST-89** - As above.
U262 **ST-91** - As above.
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U281 **D-COPY 3.1** - Powerful disk duplication software.
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U224 - Signs, Star Trek, Christmas.
U223 - Sport, Transport, Work.
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U220 - Animals, People, Places.
U218 - Cartoons, Construction, Religion, School, Weddings.
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U96 - Easter, Christmas, Jungle Animals, Famous People.
U95 - Zodiac signs, Computers, Symbols, Logos, Sports.
U251 - Babies, Furniture, Space, Watches, Skeletons.
U233 - Christmas.
U229 - Cars, Flowery decorations, Cupid, Hearts.
U227 - Palm Trees, Party invites, Maps of Europe, Stamps.
U226 - Wild West, Crowds Of People, Frames, Signs.
U225 - Fancy Letters, Cars, Cute Animals.
U222 - Music, Silhouettes, Symbols, Teddy Bears.

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G265 **BONDMINE 13** - Excellent Boulderdash clone.
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G77 - **TRACK RECORD** - Anther overhead racing game. Been around for a while, but still the best.
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G212 **FRUSTRATION** - Incredible text based adventure. Unsurpassed in depth and detail.
G217 **UCHESS** - Chess game for the AGA machine. •A1200 ONLY, REQUIRES 4 MEGABYTES•
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G232 **MONACO** - Arcade Clone, Fast and furious.
G234 **WOTS IT'S NAME** - Popular trivia board game.
G237 **BACKGAMMON** - Computerised Backgammon.
G241 **IMPERIAL WALKER** - Take control of an X-Wing fighter and stop the imperial walkers from reaching the allied HQ. 3D game.
G246 **WIBBLE WORLD GIDDLY** - Platform puzzle game in the same style as the budget Dizzy series. This is amazing.
G247 **FLEUCH** - Conversion of the C64 Thrust game. Looks crude, but one very playable game inside.
G8 BILLIARDS - Pool game.
G169 **DONKEY KONG** - The the first ever game that introduced Mario all those years ago. Still brill. •NOT A1200•
G238 **TETREN** - Tetris game with added features which take it beyond the original theme.
G121 **BIPLANES** - Take to the skys in this 1 or 2 player dog fighting game.•A1200 USERS, DISABLE CPU CACHES•
G68 **INSIDERS CLUB** - Stockmarket game.
G63 **GROUND ZERO GAMES #6** - Big bargain disk with 22 games crammed onto a single floppy.
G106 **ANTEP** - Good Role Playing game that looks like one from the old Ultima series.
G271 **JELLY QUEST** - 3D Isometric puzzle game.
G168 **OTHELLO** - Good converison of the board game. The computer provides a tough competitor.
G276 **THE GREAT ESCAPE OF BILLY BURGLER** - Great little platform romp.
G279 **MUGSIES REVENGE** - Gangster game.
G278 **FRIDAY THE 13 PART x** - Run around the rooms, and slaughter the inhabitants.
G177 **CRAZY SUE II** - Always a popular title. Platform game.
G35 **JAR** - Stands for Jump and Run. Similar to Crystal Castles. A bit like Pacman with 3D platforms and more variety.
G182 **TREASURE ISLAND** - Treasure search game for kids.
G196 **CAG** - Stands for CREATE ADVENTURE GAMES. Produce your own text adventures without programming know how. Does the hard bits, just use your imagination.
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ANIMATIONS, DEMOS, SLIDESHOWS, MUSIC

D111 **FRACTAL FRENZY** - Fast mandelbrots.
D105 **SUBSTANCE** - Vectors, vectors and more......
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D140 **RSI TIME ZONE** - One of the best mega demos around.
D148 **STATE OF THE ART** - The hottest demo of 93'. Not to be missed. •A1200 USERS, DISABLE CPU CACHES•
M84 **GATES OF PAGAN** - Class music disk. Atmospheric.
M75 **LOONEY TUNES** - Some well known tunes.
M51 **PET SHOP BOYS** - 4 of their hits recreated.
A99 **AFT AGILITY** - Funny Eric Schwartz animation.
A128 **BUBBLEMAN 11** - Marilyn Monroe.
A97 **THE CHIPS ARE UP** - Humourous cartoon.
D161 **FAIRLIGHT 242** - 29 megabytes of graphics on one disk. Awesome.
S93 **REVELATIONS** - Stunning slideshow.
S91 **MANGA** - Japanese cartoon slideshow.
S92 **AKIRA** - More Japanese cartoon piccies.
D159 **LETHAL EXIT** - Good AGA demo. •A1200 ONLY•
A162 **SAVINGS CERTIFICATE ADVERT** - From the TV AD.
A161 **THREE WAYS TO STOP SMOKING** - Drastic measures to give up the weed. •REQUIRES 1.5 MEGABYTES•

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DISK EXPANDER

Fancy getting your hands on a hard drive double the capacity of your current drive for just £40? Jason Holborn tells you how...

Once you've grown used to the slow operating speeds of Amiga disk drives and their relatively puny storage capacities, fitting a hard drive can come as something of a culture shock. As any hard drive owner will confirm, the addition of a hard drive transforms the Amiga into a totally different beast. Not only can a hard drive load your favourite programs an average of ten times faster than even the quickest floppy, but you're suddenly presented with the prospect of tens (or even hundreds) of megabytes of disk storage on tap without a single disk-swop in sight!

Just like a monthly paycheck, however, even the largest hard drives seem to get used up in no time whatsoever. Most hard drive owners have had to face this problem sooner or later – do you delete large chunks of your hard drive in order to free up some space or do you buy yourself a bigger drive? Either way, there's a considerable amount of heartache and hassle involved, not to mention the obvious financial disadvantages if you choose to upgrade. Help may finally be at hand, however, in the form of Power Computing's new *Disk Expander*, a program that claims to almost double the storage capacity of any hard drive and even floppy disks.

GET PACKING

Disk Expander doesn't conjure up a brand new hard drive out of thin air, so how does it work? Well, the key to the program's claims are a number of highly optimised compression routines held in 'XPK' libraries that compress the files on your hard drive, typically delivering a saving in disk space of between 30-70% depending upon the file. In many ways, *Disk Expander* is very similar to a conventional packer program like *Power Packer*, although there is one big difference – *Disk Expander* is completely transparant. Whenever you load or save a file onto your hard disk, *Disk Expander* steps in and automatically packs or unpacks the file depending upon the operation.

Both data files and program files are compressed and so even if you were to load a compressed file into an application, it would accept the file totally oblivious to the fact that *Disk Expander* had processed it beforehand. As a result, *Disk Expander* is the sort of utility that can be installed and then forgotten – the only time you'll even know it's running is when you install that 10Mb application only to find that just 5Mb have been swallowed up! The *Disk Expander* package consists of three programs and a couple of CLI-based support files. The first of these is the main *Disk Expander* program that allows you to specify which AmigaDOS devices are affected by *Disk Expander*. You're not just restricted to hard drive partitions, however – *Disk Expander* will happily cope with both floppy drives and even the RAM disk, giving a valuable saving in system memory. Power claim that the storage capacity of a normal floppy disk can effectively be increased to over 1.5Mb – more than enough to get both Workbench and Extras onto the same disk! You can also choose which packing algorithymn *Disk Expander* uses – a number are available, each of which has its own performance versus unpacking speed ratio.

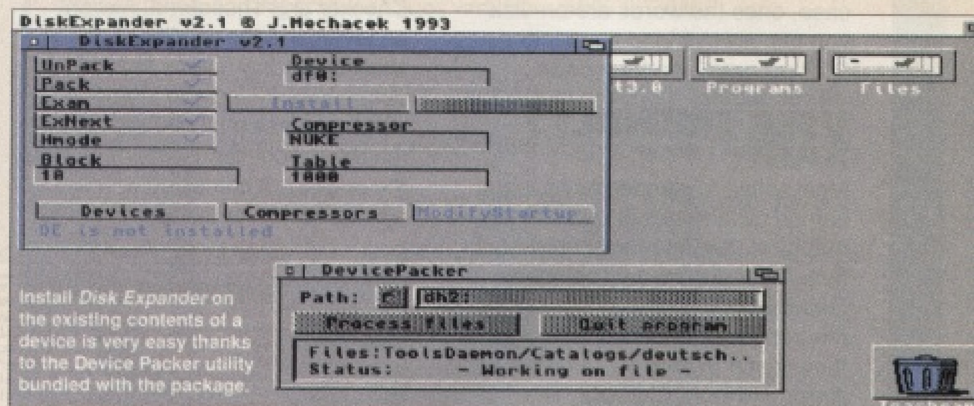
Chances are that you already have a large number of files installed on your hard drive, so it's nice to see that Power have included a separate utility that can compress these files without having to reinstall them.

The program does give you extensive control over which files are packed so you could restrict it to only a small part of your hard drive if you so wished. Packing a large drive does take time, however – my 80Mb drive took well over 10 minutes to be processed!

CONCLUSION

Obviously reliability is bound to be paramount when you're trusting all your data to a program like *Disk.Expander* and I can honestly say that during the few short weeks that *Disk Expander* has been installed on my system, I've had absolutely no problems with it at all. Only time will tell if this continues, however, but I certainly have enough confidence in the program to trust it with my data! Loading packed programs and data files does seem to take a little longer, although this is a very small price to pay for the large amounts of disk space that *Expander* frees up – I tested the utility on a 50Mb partition on my A1200's hard drive that was over 94% full and after letting *Disk Expander* get its teeth into this partition, AmigaDOS reported that the drive was now only 51% full. That's a saving of almost 22Mb!

Although *Disk Expander* is primarily aimed at hard drive owners, it's the sort of utility that can benefit all Amiga users. Even if you only have a single drive Amiga, the additional disk space that *Disk Expander* delivers is just too good to be true. For hard drive users in particular, *Disk Expander* has to be a must. It'll certainly be staying on my hard drive! CU



Install *Disk Expander* on the existing contents of a device is very easy thanks to the Device Packer utility bundled with the package.

DEStatistics v2.110 by Markus Bader ©93 Stefan Ossowski

Ram Disk · Boot3.0 · Programs · Files

DEStatistics

directory path: Programs:DTP/PPage4.0

Create statistics · Quit program

Original	Packed	PackRate	Library	Filename
8020	4818	39.9%	NUKE	pcx.gf
75156	36736	51.1%	NUKE	PDFontEngine3.0
709924	362062	49.0%	NUKE	PPage
1303	758	41.8%	NUKE	PPage.info
45	45	0.0%	----	ProDraw Clip.db
45	45	0.0%	----	ProDraw Clip.gf
116624	53760	53.9%	NUKE	prospool
1602	702	56.2%	NUKE	prospool.info
3306042	2000531	39.5%		

137 total files

The DEStatistics utility allows you to see how effective *Disk Expander* has been. Both the original file size and the packed size are displayed along with a percentage rating that indicates by how much the file has been compressed.

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EASE OF USE ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 84%
Once Disk Expander has been installed, it's completely transparent.

VALUE FOR MONEY ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 92%
£40 for a program that doubles the storage capacity of your drive is a phenomenal bargain.

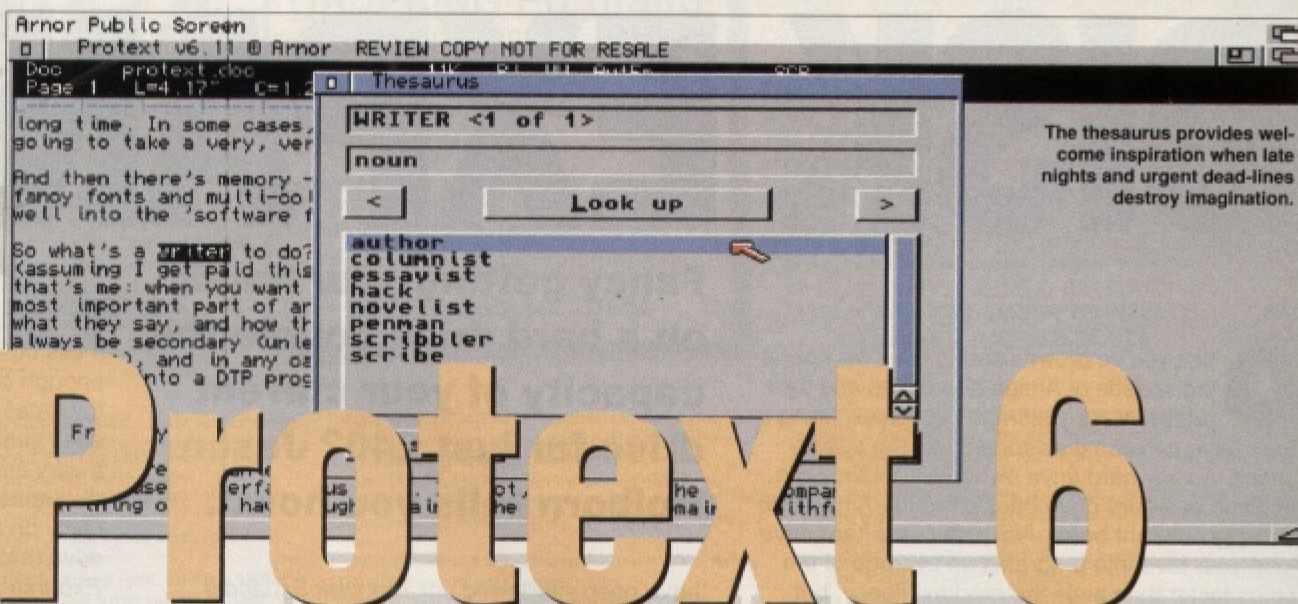
DOCUMENTATION ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 82%
A highly readable and easily understandable tome that it is a cut above the rest.

FLEXIBILITY ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ 85%
Disk Expander gives you complete control over the program's influence.

> *Disk Expander is the sort of utility that should have been built into Workbench.*

OVERALL 78%

Protext 6



The thesaurus provides welcome inspiration when late nights and urgent dead-lines destroy imagination.

For software that is nearly ten years old, you would expect more in the way of graphics or user-friendliness. John Kennedy investigates.

When you need to write a lot of words and you need to write them quickly, the last thing you want to worry about are fonts. They may look pretty and they may be completely jaggy-free, but they also take a heck of a long time to redraw every time you scroll the page. Even worse, if you need to send your words to a printer and your page is full of fancy helveticas, gothics and couriers, it's going to take a long time. In some cases, and here *Wordworth* springs to mind, it's going to take a very, very long time indeed. And then there's memory – 2Mb isn't an awful lot for an A1200, and fancy fonts and multi-colour pictures can quickly leave you short and well into the 'software failure likely' zone. So what's a writer to do? Well take a tip from a professional, and for want of someone better that's me: when you want to process words, use a word processor. The most important part of any piece of writing is the words themselves: what they say, and how they are spelt. The layout of the text should always be secondary, and in any case, once the words are on disk you can always load them into a DTP program at a later date.

USER FRIENDLY? BAH!

Most software companies have got carried away with this user-friendly, graphical user interface business. In fact, Arnor are the only company I can think of who have fought against the trend and remained faithful to their past – *Protext v6.11* on the Amiga still looks incredibly like *Protext v1.22* for the Amstrad CPC, circa 1985. There are a few more Intuition menus and windows and things, but the program is remarkably similar in look and feel, if I change the palette to black and green I could almost be back as a fresher typing up COBOL homeworks.

For some Amiga owners this will be a problem as 'serious looking' may be equated with 'difficult to use': a common fallacy. Some of the most user-hostile software I've ever used was full of unrecognisable icons and exploding windows. If a program is properly designed in the first place, it will be easy-to-use whether it is fully WIMPy, totally text based or driven solely by breath control and retina scan.

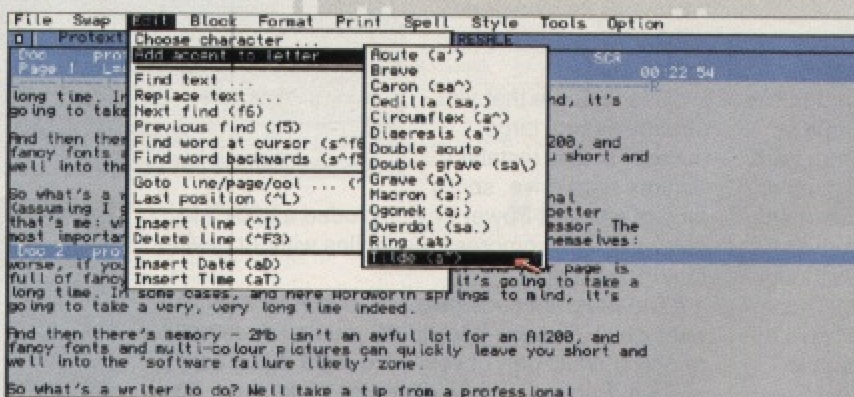
Protext is the king of serious software. Even Arnor admit that "this is what *Word Perfect* could have been", and they aren't kidding. This is a program for people who write a lot and can do without distractions. It can be argued that even moving your hands from the keyboard to move a mouse is a distraction and so all of *Protext*'s menu options can be controlled with keypresses. There is even a special Shell-like display where you can enter commands such as 'Load textfile.doc' by hand.

SPELL IT OUT

As you would expect in a dedicated WP there is a fully integrated Spelling Checker and Thesaurus. A slight annoyance is the way the spelling window seems to pick a random part of the screen to appear in, which requires a bit of chasing with the mouse pointer. Some of the guesses it comes up with are also a bit suspect – certainly Gold Disk's DTP companion Article Editor, *Transcript* is a little more intelligent. Thankfully *Protext*'s dictionary comes in both English and American forms, and with over 100,000 words (including medical and legal supplements) it doesn't take long before 99% of flagged items are your misspellings, not words new to *Protext*.

The control over hyphenation goes well beyond the call of duty, and I suspect that most writers won't even notice when it's working or not. The frequency with which words are split can be controlled, and there is even a separate dictionary to help make intelligent decisions.

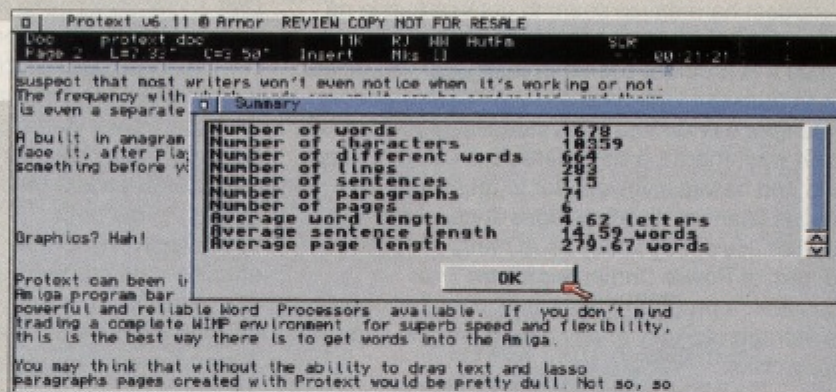
A built in anagram checker provides some light relief, which let's face it, after playing with software this serious you'll need something before you turn into a prime minister.



Arnor have always tried to cater for non-English characters and this is one of the easiest ways to add accents in any word processing program.

GRAPHICS? HAH!

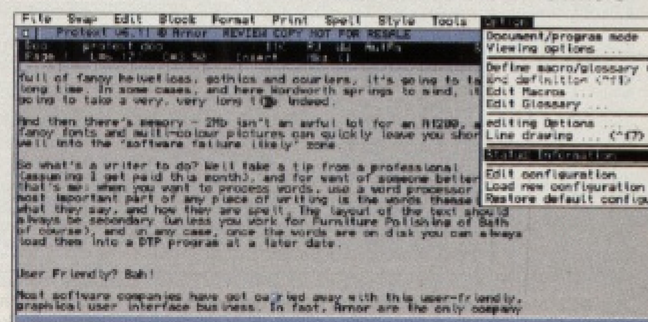
Protext has been in constant development for more years than any other Amiga program bar Workbench itself, and remains one of the most powerful and reliable Word Processors available. If you don't mind trading a complete WIMP environment for superb speed and flexibility, this is the best way there is to get words into the Amiga. You may think that without the ability to drag text and lasso paragraphs pages created with *Protext* would be pretty dull. Not so, as each page can include embedded commands which trigger all sorts of exciting options (exciting, that is, from a word processor's point of view). With the special commands, you can add printing commands (bold, italic and so on), create headers and footers (also known as titles and page numbers) and even add foot-notes.



The ability to count words (and discover if your copy will go over the heads of some) is invaluable for professionals like what I am.

Protext purists will be flabbergasted to learn that graphics can be imported into documents but, before they collapse with shock, revive them with the fact that no pictures are displayed: only a control sequence. In fact, you won't see the picture at all until it is printed, so WYSIWYNOK: What-You-See-Is-What-You-Need-To-Know. As if in further homage to a proper DTP program, you can define print 'styles' to make adding sub-headings and titles slightly easier.

The drawback is that the fonts you select must be integral to the printer, which works quite well in a lot of cases as most modern printers come with a nice selection. Owners



Protext in general use – note that there are Windows available if you really need them.

JARGON BUSTERS

ARexx: The Amiga's inter-process communication language - a way of linking programs togther.
DTP: Desktop Publishing – using a graphical approach to text layout offers totally control over how a page will appear when printed.
Font: The typeface used to display text.
*WIMP:*Windows Icons Mouse Pointer – the interface we've all come to now and love thanks to Workbench (and some early work by Rank Xerox in Palo Alto allegedly).
WP: Word Processor – a dedicated text entry, checking and printing program.
PostScript: A standard page description language used by expensive laser printers.

of PostScript and other decent lasers will be laughing all the way to the print shop, as their printers are chock-full of type faces.

In fact, when using one of these printers the only difference between a page created with *Professional Page* and one created with *Protext* would be the fact that the *Protext* page would be printed in seconds, not minutes.

PRINTER DRIVERS

Printer drivers – love 'em or loath 'em, we all need 'em. And judging from the letters we get every month, hardly anyone gets the right one. Arnor are my heroes, because *Protext* comes with its own drivers – and there are hundreds. If you can't find your printer supported as you install the software, your printer obviously doesn't exist and you have simply imagined it.

With choice of fonts and full control over styles your output will never appear better, smarter or faster.

TOO FAR

There is so much to *Protext* that it would be impossible to go into much detail on everything. In fact, the following features only get a mention to acknowledge their existence: mail merging, the creation of index and contents pages, fully programmable macros, a type writer mode for quickly banging out labels and so on, timed auto saving to prevent mishaps and an expression evaluation window.

It has to be said that for an Amiga program, *Protext* does look like it's running on a PC. As you will hopefully have gathered by now, simply because a program doesn't use icons and fancy fonts doesn't mean it isn't powerful or easy to use. Unfortunately, Arnor may have taken this just a trifle too far.

The installation screens are still a pig to use (cursoring and hitting ESC just the right number of times) and quite frankly some of the keypresses are ridiculously complicated to remember. Although the standard Amiga-C, Amiga-V and Amiga-X for copy, paste and cut are supported you'll have to commit control-F3 to memory in order to delete a line.

You want more criticisms? The split screen editing of multiple files is a little poor – certainly no where near *Cygnus Ed* – as is the ability to quickly move from one part of a large document to another. One more major downer: the Undo feature is basically rubbish.

What else... oh yes, occasionally the pointer gets stuck in a ZZzzz cloud – you can tell I'm desperate for things to find wrong with this program, can't you? Yeah, I'll admit it, deep down I like *Protext*. It was the first word processor I ever used, and now I think I'm probably hooked on it again. The speed, the ease of use, the word counting, the English spelling checker... if I need more after all that, I can even program in it: *Protext* always came with its own set of script commands, but now it supports *ARexx* which means I could probably use it with my C compiler if I so desired.

CONCLUSION

For straightforward word processing, with spell checking, good printer support and every other feature you can think of, *Protext* is the best. By no stretch of the imagination is it a Desktop Publishing programming, but that's the whole point. CU

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EASE OF USE	85%
Surprising, even without a total WIMP interface, Protext is easy to get to grips with. Good manuals help.	
VALUE FOR MONEY	75%
Business software is never particularly cheap, but Protext is good value for home users too.	
EFFECTIVENESS	90%
A very good Word Processor.	
FLEXIBILITY	94%
The many commands and scripting features mean almost anything is possible. Good to see ARexx in there.	
INNOVATION	50%
You have to be kidding - I used this program almost ten years ago.	

"Good, honest Word Processing, but not for wimps."

OVERALL 80%

t. ESC to quit menu

ClariSSA

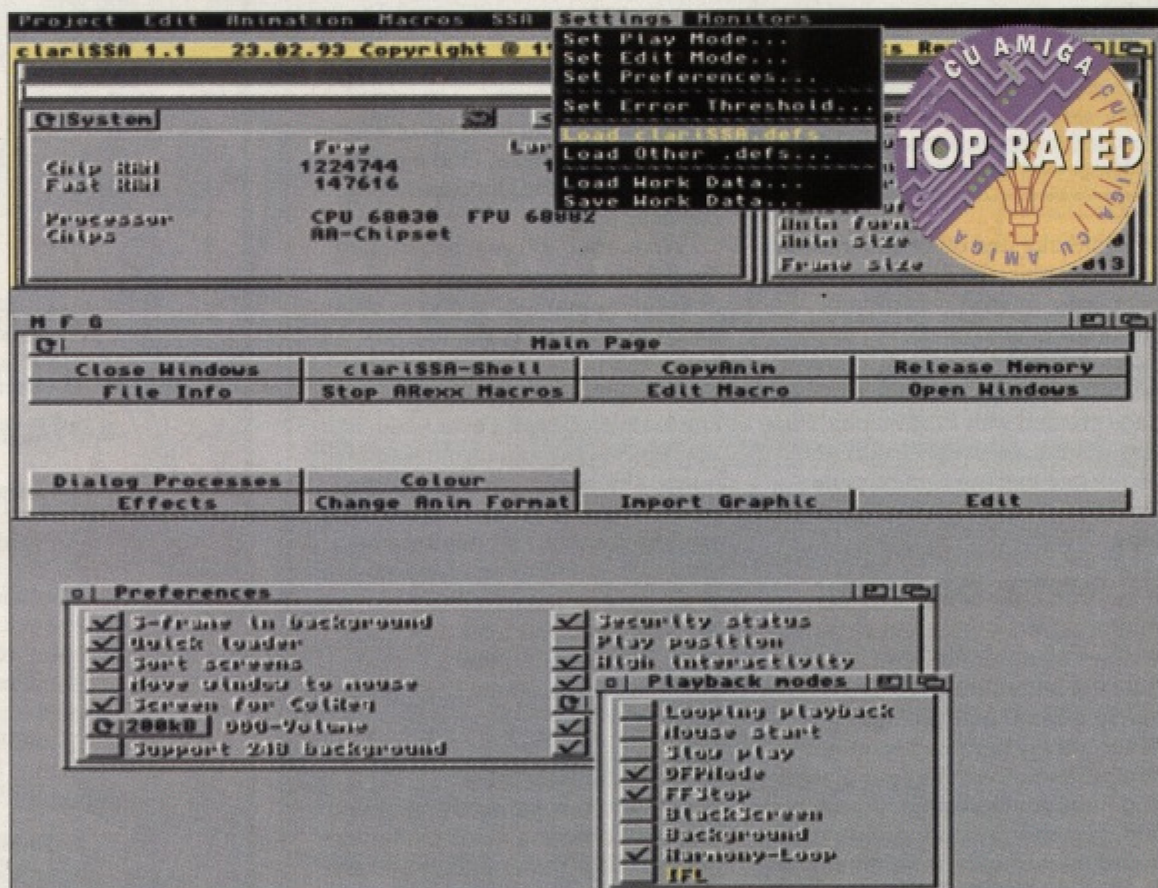
Interlace may be one big headache for most Amiga owners, but John Kennedy has made a friend that uses it to great advantage: *ClariSSA*.

Amiga graphics are special – no other computer system can offer the quality and flexibility of the IFF standard, and one part of the IFF specification is the animation standard called Anim. An Anim file contains many images, with each new frame stored as a list of differences from the previous frame in order to save memory.

Examples of Anim files include the animations created by *Deluxe Paint* - text scrolling around the screen, for example - to be added to your latest home video masterpiece.

The Anim format is good, but it's far from perfect. There is only so much information you can squeeze into a file, and you must leave time for the image to be reconstituted: after all, an Anim compression method which takes five seconds for each file is clearly unsuitable for 50 frames per second video work.

Several advances have appeared recently, and one of the more interesting has been the introduction of the Anim7 system. Normal animations files, such as those created by *DPaint*, store the graphics data in certain sized chunks. With the introduction of the 68020 and better processors, these chunks can be enlarged, which is what Anim7 does. The result is a substantial increase in play back speed.



As is the current fashion, *ClariSSA* adopts an open windows approach - all the options are displayed in windows which can be open, closed and positioned anywhere on the Workbench. It can get cluttered if you don't have a large screen.

SUPER SMOOTH

The titling program *Adorage* introduced a whole new concept – Super Smooth Animation, or SSA. SSA, works in an entirely different way (see box out), and has several advantages over Anim5 and Anim7.

Once the benefits of SSA were recognised, the wait for a program to convert normal Amiga animations began – and with the introduction of *ClariSSA*, all can be revealed.

ClariSSA is a fully-fledged animation editing system, which just happens to use the SSA system to display the finished work. Either existing Anim5 files, or a collection of individual frames, may be loaded and automatically converted to SSA. If there is a catch, it's this: all images must be in interlace format before they can be displayed. Even if they aren't, a special function will alter them.

Once in memory, the animation can be processed in all sorts of interesting ways, some which would be simply impossible with Anim5.





COLOUR

One of the major headaches with Anim5/7 is the fact that the palette must remain fixed. This means that every picture in the file has the same collection of colours as the very first. If the image changes considerably, the results can be very disappointing.

With SSA, each image has its own palette, completely separate from every other. The result is much greater colour reproduction and contrast, and the ability to add special effects such as fading and colour cycling.

The ability to fine-tune the palette for each image means you can often afford to knock a few bitplanes off your display, which is good for both playback rates and memory.

Memory is always a problem for Amiga animators – basically, you never, ever have enough. *ClariSSA* offers hope as it comes with an integral 'virtual memory' management system. Whenever memory runs low, *ClariSSA* can use spare disk space. This means it's actually possible to edit a 40Mb animation using a 1Mb Amiga. Playback is another matter altogether: you will need a lot of spare RAM for satisfactory results.

EDITING

At first glance, editing the control display is complicated, but you soon get the hang of it. There are four scratch buffers for storing images, and a

Far Left: **The Super Smooth Animation system generates new frames using a half field from two previous frames. When animated at 50 frames per second the result is a perfect smooth and fast animation.**
Left: **The traditional Anim5 format is great if your animation is simple and you have an Amiga 4000 with 64 Mb of RAM**

Interlace Cunning – How it works

The quickness of the hand may deceive the eye, but in this case the speed of a scanning electron beam can fool the brain.

A computer monitor display, like a television set, is updated 50 times a second. Rather than re-building the display from top to bottom in one go, the process is performed in two halves, called 'fields'. The first field contains the video information from the first, the third, the fifth line, etc, and the second fills in the gaps. The result is an 'interlaced' display which is much less flickery than one resulting from a single update. (Unfortunately, if the image contains horizontal single lines - such as an Intuition window for example - the flicker effect comes back with a vengeance.)

The 'Super Smooth Animation' system works by exploiting this technique and relying on the ease at which the human brain can be fooled. *ClariSSA* splits a standard Amiga animation frame into two fields. It throws one field away and uses the other to display the animation, but alternates between throwing away the first and second frames.

In effect, only half the information is displayed at a time, but because of an phenomenon of the human brain called 'persistence of vision' and the very slight difference between subsequent frames in an animation, the overall effect is a very smooth fast image. Thus the 'Super Smooth Animation' works by exploiting the very way in which the display on a monitor works.

All this explains why all images used by *ClariSSA* must be in interlace mode to start with, although images can be processed to become interlaced if required. When recorded onto video tape, any flicker caused by fine lines or shapes is markedly reduced,which means video sub-titles and special effects look excellent.

master buffer where the final SSA is created. Frames from the sources can be spliced together, and the finished film is then passed to the Master for presentation, getting converted to SSA format in the process. Individual frames can be inserted, loaded or deleted – all quickly and without fuss.

The comprehensive set of *ARexx* Macros means that the effects you can subject your animation to are limited only by your ability to dream them up. The use of *ARexx* also means integrating *ClariSSA* with other programs is a doddle - how about grabbing images from VLAB directly and them processing them automatically in *ADpro*? Haven't we been telling you that *ARexx* is great? Now you know why. A special screen grab program will allow you to 'borrow' images directly from other programs: for example, pinching a set of ray frame previews from a 3D rendering package.

FLAWS

Whilst experimenting with *ClariSSA* I found that simple non-HAM images such as text and logos worked the best. I had no luck at all with a monster HAM animation I spent a week rendering whilst on holiday – I had stored it in Anim7 format, and *ClariSSA* only supports Anim5. When I recreated a portion in Anim5 I found that the use of HAM mode only resulted in a colourful mess on-screen. Crunching down to 32 colours was the only way I could get satisfactory results.

Although very good, the manual does gloss over one or two interesting points such as the ability to drive two monitors, and the use of 24bit backdrops. Hopefully some addenda will find their way into the ring bound folder.

CONCLUSION

I came to *ClariSSA* sceptical, and came away convinced I had found a useful animation display tool. Not only will my future epic productions benefit from the fast display of images, but the editing facilities will make creating them easier. The ability to add colour effects is a worthwhile bonus.

I'm lucky to have a 10Mb A4000, but tests on lesser machines have shown that they too can benefit from the speed injection from SSA. In fact, all Amiga animators should consider this as an essential buy to help postpone the fateful day when they need to spend 4000 on a single frame video recorder.

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EASE OF USE 70%
Although totally user-definable (even the menus), the interface is rather fearsome. The good manual helps.

VALUE FOR MONEY 75%
All animators should consider getting to know ClariSSA

EFFECTIVENESS 96%
Apart from HAM problems, the SSA system lives up to it's name Super Smooth Animation.

FLEXIBILITY 90%
ARexx adds features - such as playback of SSA files from other programs.

INNOVATION 90%
The SSA system is sheer cunning, and proDAD deserve credit for it.

'It's called Super Smooth Animation, and so it is.'

OVERALL 90%

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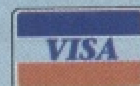
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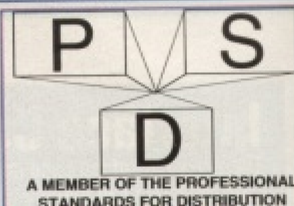
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Managers : 1 to 4 Human players, Ratings, Performance statistics, sack and offers. 3 Difficulty levels, Manager of the month and season awarded, Pools, Pick any team in any division to begin with.

League & Cup : Premier 22 teams, Division 1,2 & 3 have 24 teams, Play-offs, Tables. 7 Cup competitions with precise rules (2 legs, extra time, away goal rule, seeded draws, European Cup tables, 5 subs, non-domestic player restrictions etc.), Finalist route to glory.

Games : Yearly fixture/previous list, Week fixtures/results, Results from previous meeting with opponent (goes back up to 6 seasons).

Players : Real life statistics reflecting the start of 93/94 season with real positions, height, age. Live transfer market, Contract & wage negotiations, Preferred foot (left/right/both), Loans, Injuries, Training, Special talents, Trainees, Goalkeepers (separate skill categories), Defenders, Midfielders, Attackers & Utility, Retirements, Foreign transfers, Unhappy players, Top 10 Hot shots.

Team : Training, Tactics (15 different styles), Aggression, Formation allows specific player field settings (Left winger, Sweeper etc.).

Club : Sponsorship, Ground improvements, View opponent, Finances

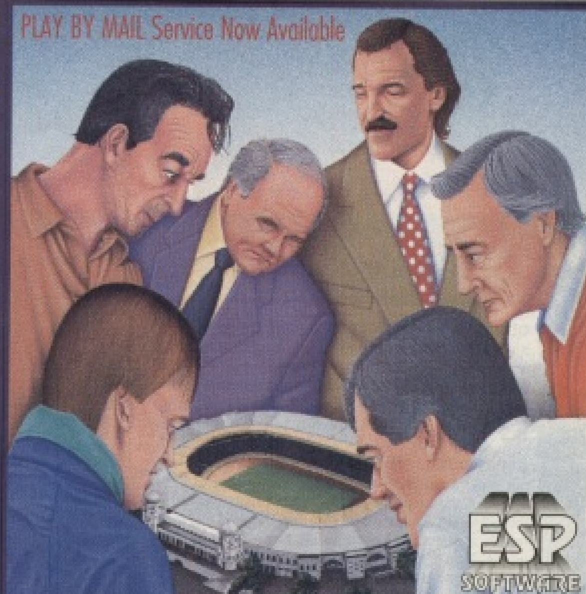
The Match : Real time scoreboard reporting goals & injuries yellow/red cards, Sound effects, Interventions permitted at any time to change tactics, formations and make subs. Physical graphical penalty participation (optional). Over 80 different referees.

Other : Fast load/save, Printer access, 20 Options to set various game preferences, Instruction book, Easy to play, Technical support.

Plus : Over 100 other meticulous refinements impossible to list here.

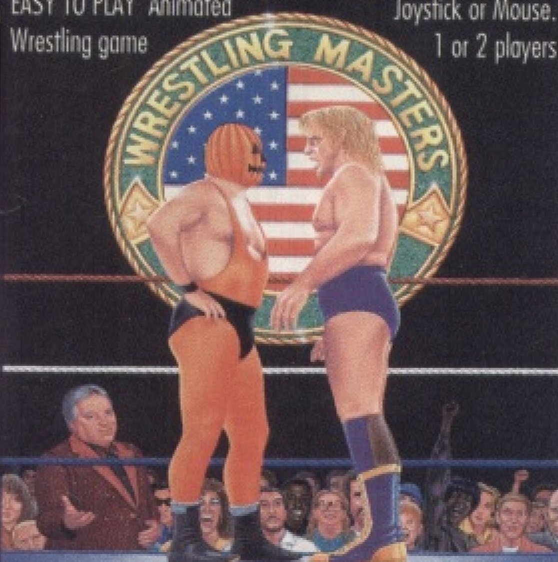
Editor : Allows you to amend various items in saved games. £12 Extra

Scottish : Dedicated version details available upon request.



EASY TO PLAY Animated Wrestling game

Joystick or Mouse. 1 or 2 players

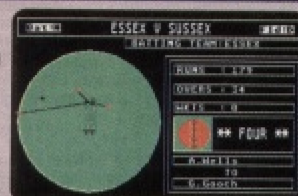


CRICKET MASTERS

This is a purely managerial cricket manager game that concentrates on strategy and includes plenty of relevant statistics. The game has been designed and developed by a true fan of the sport. It replicates everything that a real manager has to contend with and it's a totally unique production that anyone with an interest in Cricket should experience.

A summary of the main features is shown below:-

- AXA EQUITY & LAW 18 league county teams, 50 overs per game.
- 4 Cup competitions including Benson & Hedges, Nat West.
- 20 different match umpires with accurate names and strictness.
- Accurate player details Surname, height and age.
- 27 different player attributes. Most skills have a direct impact on the effectiveness of each individuals actions during a simulated match.
- Easy player selection. All game text is clearly presented.
- Batting and bowling averages. Top batting and bowling tables.
- 3 Different training intensities to boost batting, bowling or fielding.
- Weather, pitch and light often make an impact on ground condition.
- Full match highlights let you watch the action ball by ball with full graphics and/or realistic sampled sound effects for significant events (Fours, Umpire decisions, etc.). Interventions are permitted at any time to change batting tactics or fielding placings.



- 3 Batting/Bowling classifications (Normal, Attack and Defend).
- Choice of 15 different field placings.
- Full scorecard results with best batting and bowling figures.
- Other staff (Physio, Groundkeeper, Scout) can be hired and fired .
- Annual league fixtures listing. Current week and last league results.
- View current cup competition draws and historic records.
- Real time transfer market. Player contract and wage negotiations.
- Sponsors, Printer access, Finances, Poor ground fines, Manager rating.
- 15 Options to alter game preferences, Load/Save game.
- Instruction book with plenty of examples.
- Plus many more fine details that we are unable to list here.

STABLE MASTERS V2

This game has been designed to be as close to real racing as possible. Five years of development by a clever racing expert has led to the second revision of this Flat Horse Racing Simulation.

Up to 4 players can participate as Owner Trainers with the primary objective of becoming the top rated trainer, in respect of prize money won, at the end of each racing season (March to November). There are up to 35 other intelligently controlled computer trainers to compete against and compare your personal performance.

To achieve this aim you must discover a potential champion and train them so that they become capable of competing well and winning any of the 47 big prize money races (Handicap and Group). eg. The Derby

To give you an idea of the tools provided in this game to assist you reaching your objective we have listed the main features below:-

- 250 horses each with over 60 independent variables.
- 26 different race courses (2 all weather), real life characteristics mirroring the diversity of racecourses in the UK (descriptions provided).



- 20 Jockeys who vary in ability and booking fees, Orders & Feedback.
- Formbook and Win Summary Cards cover the previous 200 races.
- Animated race display or just the result. View Declaration List for races.
- Very informative report by Head stable lad. Tipsters. Bookmakers.
- Racecards similar to racing press. Real life. Handicaps & Race Types.
- Viruses, Injuries & Vets. Load/Save game. Many other items included.

Version 1 is available upon request (Simple training & betting) @ £15.

ORACLE

You could have won £44,836 with this HORSE TIPSTER Utility.

Open National Tipping Competition 1991 : Organised by Racecall, regulated by the Tote, this program achieved joint second. This led to a serious approach from a well known national book maker. Rejected in favour of supporting the public.

Winnings Statistics : 104 wins out of 166, as from 2/6 to 1/9/93.

Formula : This program tells you exactly what to do. You are NOT permitted to amend our system unlike so many other similar programs. How confident can you be in something that invites amendments!

Research & Development : Three years full time race analysis and experimentation to refine and test the prediction system.

Inside Knowledge : Plenty of unique hints from contacts in the know.

User Friendly : No racing knowledge required, easy to use, tutorial book.

Restricted Sales : As soon as our programs predictions have a prolific impact on the betting odds we will stop accepting new buyers.

Monthly Updates : Highly recommended option. If any update fails to break even we'll send the next one free of charge. From £25.

Price Increase : Highly likely. Buy now before success forces increase.

World Cup Cricket Masters



A fantastic graphical and/or tactical representation of Cricket that has been completely written by a traditional fan. You can physically participate with batting and/or bowling or leave it to the computer to automatically handle. See full feature list below :-

GAME OPTIONS
- 1 Day limited overs or test.
- White or coloured clothing.
- Three Cricket grounds.
- Load/Save game. Skill levels.
- Computer/Human players.

ANIMATED ACTION
- Sound Commentary.
- Umpire signals.
- All the strokes cut, pull, drive, etc.
- Appeals, dropped catches, run outs.
- Bouncers, wides and no balls.

STATISTICS
- Scorecard & bowling analysis.
- Weather and ground reports
- Wagon Wheel
- Manhattan Chart.



PLAYER VARIETY
- Rated on 8 adjustable factors.
- Left and right handed players.
- Range of batting types.
- Editor to amend game stats.
- Bowler types include seam, swing, change and both types of spin with 8 speed levels.

FRIENDLY CONTROLS
- Icon driven with point & click.
- Large 3D scrolling screen covering the entire playing area.
- Mouse controls bowler's line, length, direction field settings.
- Joystick control of batsman's attack level, strokes and running between wickets.

VARIABLE CONDITIONS
- Surface and pace of pitch
- Rain, bad light, cloud cover, temperature and humidity.

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					Oracle Horse Tipster (RRP £99.95)		75.00	
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CLE03 TOTAL CONCEPTS SOLAR SYSTEM Now our most popular title ! This one invites you to learn all about the planets & systems with information on all of the planets & systems with pictures supplied by Nasa, this is a superb educational package for children & adults. This title is so big it is supplied on Three disks and is priced at only £4.99.+

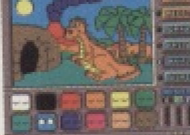
CLE05 A-CHORD So you want become the next Eric Clapton then this is just what you need ! This program will teach you nearly every single guitar chord including fingering techiniques, it will even play the chords using the amigas built in sound chip. A must for every single guitar player beginner and experts alike. Price £3.50 +

CLE15 FAST FRET By Keith Klatworthy, this program is a guitar scales tutor, the very thing for the budding lead guitarist! Will play the scales through the Amigas sound chip with ajustment of speed for every level of skill required! There are many exercises in many scales so you too can become the next rock legend! Supplied on one disk priced 3.50. +

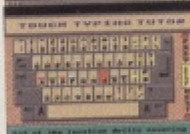
CLE029 PREHISTORIC FUN PACK This is a superb title containing four fun dinosaur games, Dinoslider a tiles puzzle game, Dinosaw is a jigsaw memory game. Snakes & caves is the old favourite snakes & ladders, and Eggstinct is a fun egg collecting game! Will keep the kids amused for ages! 1 disk 3.50.+

CLE035 TOTAL CONCEPTS SOLAR SYSTEM 2 In this sequel to our most popular title, Chris Hill brings you the very latest on the Solar System! All the very latest planetary missions are covered & if you thought the images in TC! Solar System were good wait until you see these 40+ images! This is a must if you have TC! Solar System. Supplied on 3 disks only 4.99.+

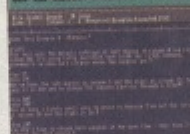
CLE049 TOTAL CONCEPTS DINOSAURS 3 Is the latest TC! to join this exellent series & uses a new layout giving you a dino image & info buttons onevery page! It includes the new superstar of the dino world Velocicraptor. If you are at all interested in Dinosaurs this is a must to complete your Dinosaur library!! Over 30 images supplied on 3 disks only 4.99.+



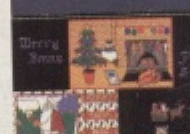
CLE051 PAINT PASTE & DRAW This is a stunning drawing/colouring book, containing lots of background pictures, brushes to paste on, plus editor to design your own , you can even add your own artwork to the picture. A superbly presented program, this one is a musut for young children! 1 disk 3.50.+



CLU03 TYPING TUTOR A program here now for all you budding office clerks, learning to type can be a real pain, lessons cost a fortune, but now when you have an amiga ! This program will take you step by step through a full typing course, showing where to place your fingers and lots more. Before long you'll be able to type as fast as I can ! Price £3.50 +



CLU032 POWERTEXT 2 This is a superb & powerful wordprocessing program, featuring embedded commands, automatic saving. Mail merging, built in spelling checker, user definable function keys, wordwrapping & much much more! You will probably never need any more than this super product! Needs 1 mg of ram. 1 disk 3.50.+



CLG022 SPARX STOCKING FILLERS by LenTucker, 3 super seasonal games for all the family! Chrismajig is a festive version of thingamajig with six picture puzzles to sort out! Christmas pairs is a traditional "pairs" game & Santas sleigh ride is a sideways scroller where you have to deliver presents down chimneys! 1 disk 3.50.+



CLG030 CAPTAIN K This is an exellent platform game. The object of the game is to collect all the items scattered around each level & kill all the monsters. For this purpose you have an unlimited supply of bombs, which when thrown, bounce for a short time before exploding, killing any monsters nearby! 1 disk 3.50.+



CLG041 F1 RACER This is a very professional game, 3d graphics in a Formula one type vein as viewed from the driving seat. Speed is subject to the speed of your machine (it really zooms on an Amiga 4000!) Lots of fun for anyone who likes driving games with super graphics & sound! Very impressive game . 1 disk 3.50.+



CLG042 CRYSTAL SKULL This was written as a commercial release but was never released! It is a full 3d role playing "Dungeon Master" type game, speak to passers by, kill them, investigate any one of 4 pyramids with all its ghosts & goblins. This will keep up your interest for ages! 1 disk 3.50.+

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- BG008 EMERALD MINES 08
- BG009 EMERALD MINES 09
- BG010 EMERALD MINES 10
- BG011 EMERALD MINES 11
- BG012 EMERALD MINES 12
- BG013 EMERALD MINES 13
- BG014 EMERALD MINES 14
- BG015 EMERALD MINES 15
- BG016 NO ONE MINES 01
- BG018 NO ONE MINES 03
- BG020 NO ONE MINES 05
- BG021 NO ONE MINES 06
- BG022 NO ONE MINES 07
- BG023 NO ONE MINES 08
- BG024 NO ONE MINES 09
- BG025 NO ONE MINES 10
- BG026 NO ONE MINES 11
- BG027 NO ONE MINES 12
- BG028 NO ONE MINES 13
- BG029 NO ONE MINES 14
- BG030 NO ONE MINES 15
- BG031 EASY RUPPLE MINE
- BG032 RUPPLE MINE 1
- BG034 RUPPLE MINE 3
- BG035 RUPPLE MINE 4
- BG036 RUPPLE MINE 5
- BG039 DOWN UNDER MINES 3
- BG040 DOWN UNDER MINES 4
- BG041 DOWN UNDER MINES 5
- BG043 DOWN UNDER MINES 7
- BG046 DOWN UNDER MINES 10
- BG047 DOWN UNDER MINES 11
- BG048 DOWN UNDER MINES 12
- BG049 DOWN UNDER MINES 13
- BG050 DOWN UNDER MINES 14
- BG051 RECYCLED MINES 01
- BG052 RECYCLED MINES 02
- BG055 RECYCLED MINES 05
- BG056 RECYCLED MINES 06
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- BG062 OZ MINE 01
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- BG065 VENOM MINE 02
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- BG067 DE BOND MINE 02
- BG068 DE BOND MINE 03
- BG071 DE BOND MINE 06
- BG072 EMERALD RUNNER 01
- BG073 EMERALD EATER
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- BG075 COLD CAVES
- BG076 INTO THE COLD CAVES
- BG077 PRO ICE MINE 01
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- BG079 ACE MINE 01
- BG080 INTO THE HISTORY HOLE
- BG081 INTO THE CRUSTY MINE
- BG082 LADYBIRD MINE KIDS
- BG083 BABY GHOST MINE 01
- BG084 BOULDERDASH 64
- BG085 BOULDERDASH CONSTRUCT KIT
- BG086 BOULDERDASH COLLECTION 01
- BG087 PRO BOULDERDASH 01
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The best selection of PD games ever assembled anywhere now all autoboot on A1200! (though not all games will run)Something for everyone!

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- ASI 8 Airace2,Hball,Snakepit & Numberfumbler!+Y
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- ASI 13 Twintris, Squamble,Block n,Ball etc!+
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- ASI 15 Battlecars Lettrix & Mambanove!Y
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- ASI 17 Tomcat, Defenda, Jetman Bugblaster+ Y
- ASI 18 Henry in Panic Skyflyer Omega race!+ Y
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- ASI 21 Zeus Tetris Battlements & Dragontiles+Y
- ASI 22 Lemmingoids,Wizzys quest Duel Mouthman+Y
- ASI 23 Quick money,BIP,Interferon Arcadia+
- ASI 24 Revenge of camels Dux Croak 3dmaze etc!+Y
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- ASI 29 DOO, Rome, Nova, B-Bal, Atax, Quadrix+Y
- ASI 30 Bounce & Blast, Total Fire Tank attack!+Y
- ASI 31 Aramar,Crazy pipe, revolution etc!+ Y
- ASI 32 Blob, Sector one & Firefighter! +Y
- ASI 33 Hyperball & War! 2 good games+Y
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- ASI 35 Poing,Snakepit,Cybernetix Jump n roll!+Y
- ASI 36 Mother lode, Wonderland, Kong Tactix!+Y
- ASI 37 Klaktris, Ghostship, Pacoar etc!+Y
- ASI 38 One on One,Baldy,Skyflyer2,Transplant!Y
- ASI 39 Lots of card games on this disk! +Y
- ASI 40 Disk full of sliding puzzle games!+Y
- ASI 41 Pacman deluxe, Hellzone Leap II etc+
- ASI 42 Galaga, Invader alert Dogs in space!+
- ASI 43 Interlock Roulette Octothello etc!+Y
- ASI 44 Nibbler,Moose Impossible,Roll on etc+Y
- ASI 45 Ditris,Paccheese,B-Castle Teserae etc+Y
- ASI 46 Amiga Q, City,Checkers, Ouch etc! + Y
- ASI 47 Elevation, Furnyre,Crave,Arena! + Y
- ASI 48 Point to point,Psycho santa etc! +Y
- ASI 49 Deathbringer in space Sue 1+2 etc!+Y
- ASI 50 Euphorion,Roach Motel,Balders grove! +Y
- ASI 51 Lamers, Fighting Warrior Shapes! +Y
- ASI 52 Rockslide, Mouthman, & Nu! +
- ASI 53 Venus Invaders,Mastermind etc! + Y
- ASI 54 Serene,Serene II & Car Wars! + Y
- ASI 55 Cli-tris, Pacatac & Asteroids! + Y
- ASI 56 Stormeagle, Extreme Violence & Tiles!+Y
- ASI 57 Poo-poo Dominoes Dizzy diamonds Squirms+Y
- ASI 58 Super raid 4 Magnatron & Maniosac!+Y
- ASI 59 Turbo thrust GX200 & Leedings! +Y
- ASI 60 Pipe master2 Alien Hunter & Checkers! +Y
- ASI 61 Rattlesnake Running Chaser Scud blaster+Y
- ASI 62 Pipeline2 Mazeman & Up and Down ! +Y
- ASI 63 Nautilus Frenzy & Drive In!! +Y
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- ASI 66 Cow wars Asmastermind & Asokoban! +Y
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- ASI 68 Demolition Mission,Boulder & Atoms!+Y
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All disks on the advert should work on the Amiga 1.2/1.3 dos systems unless otherwise stated! All disks with a "+" sign should work on the Amiga 500+ & 600 machines! However there are so many different setups now in use it is becoming impossible to test for every possible variation, so please use some caution especially with A1200/2000 with various dos systems, CDTV and of course the new Amiga 1200 & 4000 systems. Disks marked with a "Y" should be okay on the A1200 / 4000 though obviously not yet extensively tested. Please take care!

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P S D

CLASSIC CLIPART

(Black & White) (Okay on A1200 / A4000.)
The clipart in this collection is very high quality, huge bitmaps, many greater than an Amiga hires screen, for use in Dpaint or DTP packages, each disk autoboots as a slideshow allowing you to view the entire bitmap by moving the mouse! (Prices per disk!)

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ART23 DECORATIVE MONTHS 1 for every month+
ART24 WACKY Funny comic type clipart!+
ART25 HOLIDAYS Holiday type pictures!+
ART26 BANNERS 2 disks full of banners!+
ART27 ART NOUVEAU FLOWERS Floral art!+
ART28 BUTTERFLIES Nice pictures!+
ART29 FOOD 2 disks on a food/kitchen theme!+
ART30 COLOURING BOOK Colour in Dpaint!+
ART31 BORDERS 2 disks, must load into DTP!+
ART32 MAC CLIP 2 disks high quality macart!+
ART33 HORNBACK Nice scenic clipart!+
ART34 TEDDY BEARS 2 disks of Teddy bears!+
ART35 VANITY FARE 2 disks fashion clipart!+
ART36 HALLOWEEN CLIPART Wierd clipart!+
ART37 SHOWTIME Dancing, singing etc!+
ART38 VEGGIES Vegetarian clipart!+
ART39 FLORAL 14 very detailed pictures!+
ART40 MYTHS Mythical images + zodiac!+
ART41 DOG WOODCUTS Super 300dpi pics!+
ART42 CAT WOODCUTS Great wildcat pics!+
ART43 AFRICAN WOODCUTS African animals!+
ART44 AMERICAN WOODCUTS More animals!+
ART45 ARTIC WOODCUTS Northern animals!+
ART46 FARM WOODCUTS Farm animals!+
ART47 MIXED ANIMAL WOODCUTS Nice pics!+
ART48 BIRDS WOODCUTS 18th century bird pics+
ART49 MORE ANIMALS More superb pictures!+
ART50 ANIMAL LINEART Varied selection of pics
ART51 BOTANICAL ART detailed plant pics!+
ART52 FAMILY SCENES 2 disks of domestic life!+
ART53 GOLF HUMOUR 2 amusing cartoon disks!+
ART54 SPACE & TRANSPORT On a space theme!+
ART55 SOFTSCENE2 29 rural scenery pictures!+
ART56 SPORTS3 More pics on a sports theme!+
ART57 NAVY Lots of naval type pictures!+
ART58 TRAVEL 2 disks on a travel theme!+
ART59 ALPHABET Borders & alphabet clips!+(2)
ART60 ACCENTS & FLASHES Burst stars+ more+
ART61 FISH Lots of aquatic pictures! +Y
ART62 SOFTSCENE 3 More nice scenery pictures! +Y
ART63 RESTAURANT 3 disks of Restaurant pictures(3)Y
ART64 MORE HOLIDAYS Festive holiday pictures! +Y
ART65 ANIM & BIRD 44 nice pictures! +Y
ART66 MOSSBURN ANIMALS 32 nice animal pictures! +Y
ART67 BURCHFIELD KIDS Some nice kids clipart! +Y
ART68 BEAST & MYTH 3 disks of Monsters,demons etc!(3)+Y
ART69 TRANSPORT 3 disks of Cars,Airplanes Ships etc!(3)+Y
ART70 TRUCKS & TRAINS Full of Wagons trains etc! +Y
ART71 ASTROLOGY 2 disks of astrological signs! +Y
ART72 AIRCRAFT 3 disks full of aircraft pictures!(3) +Y
ART73 BIRDS Songbirds, Birds of Prey & more! +Y
ART74 DOGS Disks full of good dog pictures! +Y
ART75 HOUSES CASTLES & BUILDINGS Good pics +Y
ART76 SPORTS-MAC Lots of good sports pictures! +Y
ART77 GARDEN Lots of horticultural pictures.(5) +Y
ART78 MILITARY 10 disks of military clipart! (10) +Y
ART79 HOFFMAN GRAPHICS Nice pictures! +Y
ART80 KIDS ANIMALS DISK Cute cartoony animals! +Y
ART81 FARM & HORSES Nice pastoral pictures! +Y
ART82 SHIPS Sailing & Steam ships! +Y
ART83 ANATOMY 2 disks of huge skulls skeletons etc!+Y
ART84 CAMPING On an outdoor theme! +Y
ART85 WILDLIFE 3 disks full of wildlife clips(3)+Y
ART86 MARINE & NAUTICAL To do with sea life!+Y

AGA 1200/4000 SLIDESHOWS & PICTURES!

WEIRD SCIENCE:
Superb 256 colour hires pictures! 1200 only!*order nos: WSAGA1 - 5*

WEIRD SCIENCE SUPER HAM:
Fantastic 262000 colour hires raytraced & digitized pictures, hardly any different to the 24 bit originals, show to PC owning friends and watch them weep! *order nos: SH1-15 .... 15 Super discs!*

WSAGA6 + 7 JPEG loaders!! **These disks contains 24 bit Jpeg pictures which unpack in ram to display as Superham 8 on a 1200/4000 machine!! Brilliant!**
WSAGA8-12 5 Jpegs of wildlife pics,16 megabytes unpacked per disk! displays as superham on 1200! Amazing!
WSAGA13 24bit Jpeg Vista landscapes!

JPEG 24 BIT PICS!
An amazing 12 disks full of brilliant 24 bit pics by Michel Rigo! Remember you need tons of memory & some form of 24 bit display to view, or convert to superham! JP1-12.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

PM012 AMIGADEUS CLASSICAL Eine Kleiner etc. + Y
PM022/23 CLASSICAL MUSIC Bach, Handel etc +Y
PM035 DIGITAL DEBUSSY Fab R Baxter conversions!+Y
PM036 DIGITAL DEBUSSYII classic Debussy music!+ Y
PM070 RHAPSODY IN BLUE tracked by Rob Baxter! 1MY
PM082a/82b VIVALDI - FOUR SEASONS (2) V.Good !+ Y
PM090/91MOZART HORNCONCERTOS need 1mg chip+ Y
PM130/2 BACH BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS 1 to 6 +Y 3
PM150 DESKTOP HARPSICHORD RECITAL Classics! + Y
PM155/6 NUTCRACKER SUITE Super rendition!+
PM174 CLASSIC WORKS Grieg & Bach classics! +Y
PM175 SONIX MUSIC Some nice scores here!(loadwb)+Y
PM183 CLASSIX GOLD Bach Toccata& Fugue (1mg chip)
PM184 MOZART FLUTE CONCERTOS 1mg chip! +Y
PM216 HANDELS FIREWORKS MUSIC (1mg chip) +Y

AMOS PD

APD036 AMOS UPATER LATEST VERSION v1.36 + Y
APD180/1 DUNGEON DELVER Roam around collect keys(2)+
APD182/3 PIXIE KINGDOM Good exploration game (2) +
APD237 SHAPES Excellent kids game !+Y
APD257 CASSETTE LABELLER + MIXED SOURCE+Y
APD271 WIZARDS DOMAIN graphical adventure+Y
APD341 TOTALLY AMOS Good read for programmers!+Y
APD347 NOTEBOOK & SHOPPING LIST Easy to use !+ Y
APD363 FAMILY HISTORY DATABASE Latest version!+Y
APD373 COMPILER 1.36 UPDATE, LATEST compiler !+Y
APD431 KARATE WORM II Nice little game! +Y
APD435 DRIVER TEST Test the speed of your reactions!+Y
APD442 SLIDESHOW CONSTRUCTION SET V2! +Y
APD451 NODDY,S PLAYTIME Educational demo! +Y
APD452 RAMOS PRO For Amos Professional! +Y
APD458 TOP OF THE LEAGUE Football manager!+Y
APD466 AMOS PRO UPDATER V1.12 Just in!!!! +Y

COLOURED CLIPART

This is a superb collection of coloured clipart, mostly in Ham mode (4096 colours), though some is in 16 colours. Can be loaded into Deluxe Paint 4 or any other package accepting Ham pictures!
(OK on 500, 500+, 600, 1200 & 4000!)

CCL001 MAPS, Afganistan - Botswana, autoboots! + Y
CCL002 MAPS, Brazil - Checkoslovakia, autoboots! +Y
CCL003 MAPS, Denmark - Grenada , hires maps! +Y
CCL004 MAPS, Guadel - Illinois, hires maps! +Y
CCL005 MAPS, India - Luxembourg, hire maps! +Y
CCL006 MAPS, Macau - Missisipi, autoboots! +Y
CCL007 MAPS, Montana - New York, hires maps! +Y
CCL008 MAPS, Neutral Zone - Iraq - S Dakota! +Y
CCL009 MAPS, Senegal - Tuuaw, autoboots! +Y
CCL010 MAPS, Texas - Zimbabwe, autoboots! +Y
CCL011 REPTILES, good pictures, autoboots! +Y
CCL012/3 ACTORS, famous faces, autoboots! +Y(2)
CCL015 AIRCRAFT, 1-26, assorted, autoboots! +Y
CCL016 AIRCRAFT, 27-32 & Cars! autoboots! +Y
CCL018 BIRDS, 1-12 Super pictures, autoboots! +Y
CCL019 BIRDS, 13-29 More avian pictures! +Y
CCL020 BIRDS, 30-41 Lots more birds,autoboots! +Y
CCL021 BIRDS, Many more bird pics, autoboots! +Y
CCL022 BIRDS, And some more fab pictures! +Y
CCL023 BIRDS, 116-130 Some good pictures! +Y
CCL024 BIRDS, 131-138 More bird pictures! +Y
CCL026 BIRDS, More superb pictures here! +Y
CCL027 CATS, 1-16 Super cat pics,autoboots! +Y
CCL028/35 DOGS, 1-126 Super dog pics,8 disks! +Y
CCL036 EXPLORERS 1-13 famous explorers,autoboots+y
CCL037/40 FISH 1-92 Super pics pictures,(4 disks)+y
CCL041 FLOWERS 1-13 Flower pictures,autoboots!+y
CCL042 FLOWERS 14-25 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
CCL043 FLOWERS 26-37 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
CCL044 FLOWERS 38-50 More flower pics,workbench+y
CCL045 FLOWERS 51-62 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
CCL046 FLOWERS 63-74 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
CCL047 FLOWERS 75-87 More flower pics,autoboots!+y
CCL048 FLOWERS 88-100 More flower pics,autoboots+y
CCL049 FLOWERS 101-113 More flower pics,autoboots+y
CCL050 FLOWERS 114-127 More flower pics,autoboots+y
CCL051 FLOWERS 128-138, FRUIT 1-4 pics autoboots+y
CCL052 FRUIT 5-18, Good pictures! autoboots! +Y
CCL054 FRUIT, More fruit & leaves etc!,autoboots+Y
CCL055 FRONTIER 1-13 Pioneer pictures,autoboots
CCL056 HORSES 1-16 Great horse pics,autoboots! +Y
CCL057 HORSES 17-22, Insects 1-9, autoboots! +Y
CCL058 INSECTS 11-23 Small creatures! +Y
CCL059 INSECTS 24-41 More pics! autoboots! +Y
CCL060 INSECTS 42-59 More insects! autoboots! +Y
CCL061 INSECTS 60-63, Inventors 1-11 autoboots! +Y
CCL062 INVENTORS 12-24 More inventors autoboots! +Y
CCL063 INVENTORS 25-30, MAMMALS 1-10! autoboots! +Y
CCL064 MAMMALS 11-26 More animals pictures! +Y
CCL065 MAMMALS 27-46 and more animals! +Y
CCL066 MAMMALS 45-65 more mammals,autoboots! +Y
CCL067 MAMMALS 66-82 and some more! autoboots! +Y
CCL068 MAMMALS 83-102 and many more autoboots+Y
CCL069 MAMMALS 103-119 mamy more! autoboots! +Y
CCL070 MAMMALS 121-141 superb pictures! autoboots +Y
CCL071 MAMMALS 142-158, & INSTRUMENTS 1-4! +Y
CCL072 INSTRUMENTS 4-25 Musical! autoboots +Y
CCL073 INSTRUMENTS 26-38, MILITARY 1-6 autoboots +Y
CCL074 MILITARY 7-17,& MUSICIANS 1-4! +Y
CCL075 MUSICIANS 9 -21 Classical! autoboots! +Y
CCL076 PREHISTORIC 2-19 Dinosaurs! autoboots! +Y
CCL077 PREHISTORIC 20-25, PEOPLE 1-8 autoboots! +Y
CCL078/80 PEOPLE 9-50 Lots of people! (3 disks)+Y
CCL081 PEOPLE & Presidents, good pictures! +Y
CCL082/4 PRESIDENTS 1-40 USA presidents,3 disks +Y
CCL085 REPTILES 1-19 Good pictures autoboots! +Y
CCL086 REPTILES 19-38 More reptiles! autoboots! +Y
CCL087 REPTILES 39-50, Ships 1-9,autoboots! +Y
CCL088 SHIPS 10-33 Marine vessels! +Y
CCL089 SPORTSMEN, Various sportsmen,autoboots! +Y
CCL091 TREES, Lots of tree pictures! autoboots! +Y
CCL092 TREES, Lots more tree pics! autoboots! +Y
CCL093 TREES, And some more trees! +Y
CCL094 TREES 57-70 trees lots of trees,autoboots!+y
CCL095 TREES 71-84 more tree pictures, autoboots!+y
CCL096 TREES 85-100 even more trees,workbench!+y
CCL097/100 VEGETABLES 1-48 good pics 4 disks,workbench+y

COLOUR BRUSH CLIPART

Saved as brushes so they can be pulled easily into Dpaint!

CB001 Lots of brushes on an art & schoolwork theme. +Y
CB002 Lots of brushes of stores food,garden home & more! +Y
CB003 Lots of brushes on a sporting theme (142 brushes) +Y
CB004 Lots of brushes on a food & confectionary theme! +Y
CB005 Lots of brushes, 155 pics on a financial theme. +Y
CB006 Lots of brushes of cute cartoon caracters! +Y

CDROMS/CDROMS/CDROMS/CDROMS/CDROMS/CDROMS/CDRO

AMIGA CD ROM COMPACT DISCS!

Superb CD roms for your CDTV, CD32 or A570 add on!

CDPD 1 Features Fred Fish 1-660 , hundreds of music modules, & much much more! 19.95.

CDTV DEMO DISK Over 600 megabytes of demos, samples, games, clipart, animations & 1000 modules to play 19.95.

CDPD 2 This CD contains Fred Fish 661-760, the Scope library 1-220, The Jam disks, The AB20 archives & much more! 19.95

CDPD3 This latest CD from Almathera contains Fish761-890,tons of clipart,Ham8 & Jpeg pics, Classical books & much more! 19.95.

CD DEMO COLLECTION II Exellect CD containing over 100 ready to run games,anims, 6000 sound samples,IFF pictures, modules,demos & much more!
Please add 50p per CD for P&P. **Only 19.95.**

NEW WEIRD SCIENCE MULTIMEDIA TOOLKIT CD ROM!

This is a superb CD Rom, filled to the brim with over 10,000 files, 500 24bit jpeg images & 500 Ham8 & Ham interlace versions,Hundreds of megabytes of clipart, (iff black & white,colour and scaleable),Hunreds of iff fonts, Compugraphic fonts & coloured fonts, icons, music modules, music samples and lots more! Includes utilities to view & listen to the files, a front end menu program & slideshows! Superb for multimedia presentations! Works on CDTV, CD32, Amiga CD Rom & is also PC compatible onsuitable PC CD Rom! Superb value only 19.95. +50p p&p.

2 JPEG IMAGES FROM CD ROM!!!

NEW! UPD GOLD LICENCEWARE! MAD FIGHTER 1200!

Superb new 3 disk fighting game for the 1200 only! This will keep you busy for ages as you try to defeat one opponent after another. Huge sprites and fast gameplay make this an essential 1200 game!
A UPD Licenseware product only 5.99+50p p&p.

2 IMAGES FROM MAD FIGHTER!!

GAMES

PG006 ANTEP & SLOT CARS role playing game+ Y
PG021 ATIC ATAC Really playable game! + Y
PG023 BATTLEFORCE strategy war game!
PG024 BLACKJACK A good card game! +
PG026 CASTLE OF DOOM Excellent! Get it + Y
PG028 COLOSSUS & WORLD Fab adventures !+ Y
PG031 DARKSTAFF Spec emulated text adventure!+
PG032 DRAGONS CAVE D&D style game Mega+ Y
PG034 ETERNAL ROME Strategy & DOMINOES+ Y
PG046 HACK Great text adventure-infocom style! +Y
PG047 HOLLYWOOD TRIVIA Nice Trivia Game! +
PG048 HOLY GRAIL One of the best Text adventures+ Y
PG053 LARN A superb text adventure game + Y
PG059 LORE OF CONQUEST space trading D&D game Y
PG062 MENTAL IMAGE 1 Gridrunner invaders & rebound+
PG063 MORIA Classic adventure now version 5.4! +Y
PG064 NAPOLEONIC WAR SIMULATOR A strategy game!
PG068 NO MANS LAND Hi tech war game-shoot em up. +Y
PG070 PETER'S QUEST Rescue the maiden platform!+
PG071 POM POM GUNNER Like beach-head on the 64+Y
PG072 PROPERTY MARKET Become a millionaire !!!
PG073 RAPHAELS REVENGE Turtle game in SEUCK!+
PG074 RETURN TO EARTH Elite space trading game! +Y
PG076 SEVEN TILES Speedball type game-MEGA!
PG079 SEALANCE A submarine strategy game +Y
PG101 THE INSIDERS CLUB Stocks & shares game
PG121 A500+ GAMES PACK 21 games to run on a plus+Y
PG124 TOTAL WAR This is a good risk type game! +
PG127 AIRMANIA Super platform game from Addware + Y
PG128 CHEAT WORKS Stacks of new cheats.
PG129 PUGGLES Brilliant Q*Bert game!
PG131 ATLANTIS A nice looking strategy game!+
PG138 BATTLE OF BRITAIN & WAR strategy War games!
PG139 DUNGEONS OF MADROJ Excellent D&D game+Y
PG140 MIND GAMES Stacks of fun with this!
PG149 A NIGHT AT THE TOWN Witty text adventure!+
PG153 WAR very good strategy/arcade game+Y
PG154 NUMPTY & ALIEN INVADERS Manic miner type game
PG159 MR BRICK Great mario type collect coins game!
PG164 GAME TAMER 2.3 joystick tester & 268 cheats!+
PG165 SOLID SQUAD Nice little driving game!
PG168 WHATSITSNAME Great new puzzle game just in.
PG174 AMOS CRICKET Shareware cricket game,1 or 2plr+
PG175 SPACETRAX 2 player shoot each other up game+Y
PG178 MENTAL IMAGE 2 Three Excellent new games +
PG180 SECTOR 1 A nice game similar to Alien Breed+
PG182 ETHOS Simple graphical adventue Sinbad style+Y
PG183 CATACOOMBS great D&D style game. VG.GFX +Y
PG184 FATAL MISSION Very good Shootemup game +
PG190 TOP SECRET An exellent quality platform game!+
PG191 ACT OF WAR New space strategy game! +Y
PG194 INTRUDER ALERT Very good strategy game!
PG199 CASHFRUIT Nice fruit machine game! +Y
PG200 ALL ROUNDER CRICKET New cricket game!+Y
PG202/3 IRON CLADS Good strategic war game!(2)Y
PG205 SOCCER CARDS Football managing game!+Y
PG218/9 CLASH OF THE EMPIRES Super strategy!+ Y
PG255 KINGDOM AT WAR Nice strategy war game!+Y
PG256 LCD DREAMS 4 small LCD games! +Y
PG257 THE FUNHOUSE Enigma,Thundertron & a slide!+Y
PG258 AGA TETRIS 1200 tetris game & more! Y
PG259 PICTURE PUZZLE Solve picture jigsaws!+Y
PG260/1 18TH HOLE A nice golf game! (2) +Y
PG262 AGA CHESS Needs 4mg of ram to play! AGA ONLY.
PG266 BOX ADVENTURE Nice shareware adventure+Y
PG267 SLAMBALL V1.1 Futuristic Management sim! +Y
PG272 MAYHEM 2 Multiplayer manic maze game! +Y
PG273 MUGSIE Money making gangster adventure!+Y
PG274 ROULETTE & PUNTO 2 nice games (not 1.3)+Y
PG275 BLITZ GAMES Worm Buzzbar Speed+Insectoids+Y
PG279/80 OLYMPIAD 2 disk Lemming olympic events(2)+Y
PG281 CAVEFLIGHT Simple dodge the obstacles game+Y
PG283/4 EXORCISM Good 2 disk adventure+graphics+Y
PG286 MYSTERY 2144AD Nice text adventure! +Y
PG289/90 NECESSARY ROUGHNESS American football+Y
PG291 TITANIC CHEATS Hundreds of useful cheats! +Y
PG293 MR BROWNSTONE Lots of rooms, good!! +Y
PG294 INTENSE Another nice shoot em up! +Y
PG295 THRUST DUEL Control ship against gravity+Y
PG298 FATAL MISSION 2 Superb blasting shoot up!+Y
PG299 ASI WORKBENCH GAMES Good set of games! +Y
PG300 ASI WORKBENCH GAMES II And some more! +Y
PG301/2 MOTOROLA 020 INVADERS For 1200 ONLY!(2).
PG303 MAD FIGHTER Fab PD version !!1200 ONLY.
PG304 KUNG FOO CHARLIE Great little platformer!+Y
PG305/7 KLONDIKE II AGA Exellent,3 disks 1200 ONLY.

EDUCATION

PE001/5 EDUCATION SET science programs for age 11+ +Y
PE006 KIDSPAINT Fab little talking colouring book+Y
PE007/8 LEARN & PLAY Maths, spelling etc. 5-10 yrs +Y
PE009 STORYLAND 2 Save toyland from the witch! +Y
PE010 TOTAL CONCEPTS ASTROMOMY Book on disk.+Y
PE011 TOTAL CONCEPTS DINOSAURS Book on a disk+Y
PE013 SIMON & SPACE MATHS Talking maths program
PE014 SPANISH, FRENCH, GERMAN TUTOR+Not 600!
PE016 COLOUR THE ALPHABET learn letters & colours! +Y
PE018 TYPING TUTOR, Superspell Budget & Mscalendar+Y
PE019 DUNKS DTP A sort of DeskTopPublisher for kids +Y
PE020 MATHS DRILL Good maths disk for the young! +Y
PE021/4 SCIENCE Very good four disk set!+ (4)Y
PE025 FRACTIONS & SILHOUETTES Good maths tutor+ Y
PE026 WW II FACTS Good historical program!+ Y
PE027 AMIGA BEGINNER Learn to use your machine+ Y
PE028 MATHS ADVENTURE Solve questions to progress+Y
PE030/2 DESKTOP GUIDE TO ELECTRONIC MUSIC! +Y
PE033 MATCH WITH HUMPTY Match the objects! + Y
PE034 WORLD GEOGRAPHY Quite useful disk! +Y
PE035 KIDS DISK1 Super to learn reading! +Y
PE036 FIREWORKS ALPHABET Good for kids! +Y
PE037 HOORAY FOR HENRIETTA Superb preview!+Y
PE038 HENRIETTAS BOOK OF SPELLS Fab preview!+Y
PE039 COLOUR IT Exelent little colouring pad!+Y
PE040 HOW THE EARTH BEGAN The full story! +Y
PE041 SINGALONG NURSERY RHYMES Good fun! +Y
PE042 CHILDRENS FAVOURITES More fun! +Y
PE043 PICTURES & LETTERS For very young.1mg chip+Y
PE044/5 AMERICAN FOOTBALL Learn the game(2)!+Y
PE046 TOTAL CONCEPTS DINOS 3 PREVIEW Superb +Y
PE047 ASI BACK TO SKOOL1 Style Count & Words +Y
PE048 ASI BACK TO SKOOL2 Simon Cal maths train etc+Y
PE049 BACK TO SKOOL3 Treasure search,Reflex etc+Y
PE050 THE LITTLE TRAVELLER Learn about countries+Y
PE051 BODYPARTS Superb preview of full program! +Y
PE052 COMMUNICATE Superb sign language teacher! +Y

BUSINESS

PB001 AMICASH bank management program+Y
PB002/3 ANALYTICALC Superb spreadsheet!+ (2)Y
PB004 ASI LABEL PRINTERS 3 of the best+Y
PB005 BANKIN control your cheque book! +Y
PB006 BUSINESS CARD MAKER Nice program+
PB007 CLERK Complete accounts package+Y
PB008 DESKTOP PUBLISHER Simple to use +Y
PB009 FLEXYBASE DATABASE Address keeper+Y
PB011 MISC.BUSINESS Geotime, Grocery list, Calc
PB013 QED Simple & effective text ed+Y
PB014 RIM DATABASE Fully relational !!+Y
PB015 TEXTPLUS V3.00 The BEST Wordprocessor +Y
PB017 VISICALC SPREADSHEET Simple to use+Y
PB019 BUSINESS LETTERS contracts, letters + more+Y
PB020 TEXT ENGINE 4.1 THE LATEST Version !!! +Y
PB022 SBASE IIIv1.3 Latest version of super database+Y
PB023 FORMS REALLY UNLIMITED form creation prog+Y
PB024 LAST WILL & TESTAMENTS Just in case !+Y
PB025 EDWORD Brand new wordpro - V.good +Y
PB026 AGRAPH Superb Program graphing data +Y
PB028 LITTLE OFFICE Intergrated Wpro,Sst,Dbase,Gfx+Y
PB029 ADDRESS PRINT Good label printing program! +Y
PB030 THE MONEY PROGRAM Home accounting! +Y
PB031 EASYCALC A superb new Fast spreadsheet! +Y
PB033 A BASE A shareware database program! +Y
PB034 ILLINOIS LABELS Super label program!+Y
PB035 BUDGET V1.34 manage personal finances!+
PB036 CHECKBOOK ACCOUNTANT V2.01 superb! +Y
PB037 AMIBASE PRO II Latest version of database! +Y
PB038 BUDDBASE V1.2 Very nice easy to use database+Y
PB039 BANK V1.0 A nice banking program! +Y
PB040 PAY ADVICE ANALYSER V3 Latest version! +Y
PB041 AMIGAWORD A useful geographical database!+Y
PB042 EASYCALC PLUS+ Improved, only dos 2 or over!+Y
PB043 ACCOUNT MASTER Home finance program. +Y

DEMOS

PD002 ALARM MEGADEMO Acid type video demo!+Y
PD005 AMOS 3D DEMO Shows some great effects!+Y
PD018 CHAOS ROCK Fab light show with fractals!+
PD068 PHENOMENA ENIGMA Absolutely brilliant! +Y
PD076 PLASMUTEX Good plasma & great music +
PD093 SCOOPEX CHROMIUM Superb demo.+Y
PD094 SCOOPEX MENTAL HANGOVER A classic+
PD097 SILENTS GLOBAL TRASH Incredible!!+
PD130/34 ALCATRAZ ODDESSY Awesome!! Ok on 500+!
PD154 DECAY GET FROGGED Superb quality! +Y
PD165 DARK DEMON Mega new demo ...get it! +Y
PD170 PIECE OF MIND Good 3D vector effects. +Y
PD171/2 SILENTS EXPOSE(2) Incredible Get it !+Y
PD177/8 TRSI TIME ZONE New, some good effects!+Y
PD182 SPACEBALL Absolutely brill,needs 1meg chip!+Y
PD183 DIGITAL LETHAL EXIT Good vectors demo! +Y Y
PD185/6 ANDROMEDA MIRROR Fab Music & Graphics!+Y
PD187 HOY AGA DEMO 1st 1200 demo,a must! 1200 ONLY
PD188 SANITY WORLD OF COMMODORE Super demo+Y
PD189/90 SILENTS DEMON DOWNLOAD Fab demo! (2) +Y
PD197 MOBIL DESTINATION UNKNOWN by Spaceballs+Y
PD200 PHOENIX DEMO inc Flashy rave demo!+Y
PD201 1200 INTROS Yes, some AGA intros at last! Y
PD202 TECHNOLOGICAL DEATH Freaky techno rave +Y
PD205 FAIRLIGHT ILLUSION Good demo 1mg chip! +Y
PD206 MELON HOW TO SKIN A CAT Nice effects! +Y
PD207 NEMAL BOUNDLESS VOID good effects & music+
PD208 HOI AGA DEMO 2 2nd fab demo for 1200 only! Y
PD209 STONE ARTS ATMOSPHERE Nice demo. +Y
PD211 POSEIDON CEREBAL LOBOTOMY Great,not1.3+Y
PD213 TROJAN TECKNO TRACKS Amazing effects!!+Y
PD214 TALENT PANTA RHEA realtime 3d fractals1200 only
PD215 FAIRLIGHT 242 Unusual & interesting demo! +Y

NEW!

PG308 HIGH OCTANE Super overhead driving game+Y
PG309 JELLYQUEST Nice jumping puzzle demo! +Y
PG310 PUZZWORD Sliding block puzzle game. +Y
PG311 COLOUR CHANGES Nice colour board game +Y
PG312 SUPERPONG Classic ping pong with extras 2mg+Y
PG313 ROAD TO HELL Super driving race game!+Y
PU394 GRINDER V1.0 Picture file converter! +Y
PU395 MENU MASTER 3 Floppy menu system! +Y
PU396 BAD FORMAT Make unusable disks work! +Y
PU397 POWERLOGO V1.3 Dialect of Logo language+Y
PU398 CASIO DIGITAL DIARY COMMS LINK software+Y
PU399 AIBB Amiga Benchmark speed tests! +Y
PU400 AMBUSH V1.03 Fix font size problems! +Y
PE054 ARTISTIX Superb shareware art package+Y
PE055 JUNIOR MATHS Suitable for young children+Y
PA149 SPAR TREK 6 Clever CD32 advert animation+Y
PP127/30 CHARLY CAT DANDRUFF DUO Amusing (4)3mg
PD216/7 A TRIP TO DEEP BASS A must have rave demo!+Y
PD218 VIVID ABSTRAX PIG AGA Mega colourful1200 ONLY.
PD219 IMPULSE ART & GO Good music & pictures! +Y
PD220 LEMON RINK A DINK Very classy demo!+Not 1200.
PM211 MBC BASS IN YA FACE Hardcore techno music+Y
PM212 FOR DA UNDERGROUND More hardcore music! +Y
PM213 MIGAMASTER OPEN YOUR EYES Megamix! +Y
PM214 MIGAMASTER BACKGROUND TO HEAVEN Mega +Y
PM215 MIGAMASTER SOUL VIBRATION Fab megamix! +Y
PM216 DUAL CREW CHROMATIC good music pack+Y
PM127 LEGALIZE IT 1 Great Amiga music disk! +Y
PS130/1 NIGHTBREED AGA SLIDES Scrummy pics(2)1200.
PS132 HAM TEXTURES 6 super textured backgrounds! +Y

CLASSICAL LITERATURE

Super books on a disk,perfect for English Literature revision!(ok 500+,600, 1200)
LIT1 Midsummer nights dream, Macbeth, Julius Caesar,Anthony & Cleopatra.
LIT 2 As you like it, Lovers complaint, Cymbeline, Hamlet.
LIT 3 Romeo & Juliet, Passionate pilgrim,Phoenix & Turtle,Sonnets Coriolanus.
LIT 4 Twelfth night, Venus & Adonis, Troilus & Cressida, Love labours lost.
LIT 5 Two Gentlemen of Verona,A Winters tale,Rape of Lucrece,Pericles.
LIT 6 Othello,Much ado about nothing, Measure for measure.
LIT 7 Henry the Sixth (Parts 1, 2, & 3)
LIT 8 Henry the Fourth (Parts 1 & 2), Henry the Fifth.
LIT 9 Richard the Second, Richard the Third.
LIT10 Henry the Eighth, King John, King Lear.
LIT11 The Taming of the Shrew,The Tempest,Timon of Athens,Titu Andronicus
LIT12 Alls well,Comedy of errors,Merchant of Venice,Merry wives of Windsor.
LIT13 WORKS OF MILTON 1 Paradise Lost.
LIT14 WORKS OF MILTON 2 Poems, Sonnets etc.
LIT15 WORKS OF HOMER The Illiad (2 disks)
LIT16 WORKS OF HOMER The Odyssey.
LIT17 MARK TWAIN Tom Sawyer
LIT18 MARK TWAIN The Prince & the Pauper.
LIT19 LEWIS CARROLL Alice in Wonderland & Alice Through looking glass.

ANIMATIONS

PA039 ERIC-S AMY VS WALKER Cute & sexy! 1.5M Y
PA040 ERIC-S BATMAN vs JOKER Very funny!!!+Y
PA042 ERIC-S COYOTE STRIKES BACK 1mg too! +
PA043 ERIC-S MORE AEROTOONS Very witty !!!+ Y
PA045 ERIC-S STEALTHY II Mig-29 vs Stealthy !+Y
PA053/4 LIGHT CYCLES (2) Tron animation+
PA065/68 REAL 3D (4) Superb of the program+
PA072 THE JUGGLER A classic amiga demo!+ Y
PA074 THE WALKER vs The Helicopter - Mega !+ Y
PA075 THE WALKER vs A2000 A classic ! + Y
PA086 FRACTAL ANIMATION full screen low fly anim+Y
PA091/3 GAS TURBINE, STEAM & PETROL ENGINE (3)+Y
PA094 AMY JOGS,WALKS & SNEEZES by E Schwartz! +Y
PA095 HOW TO RUN INTO A WALL by Eric Schwartz! +Y
PA099 ATF AGILITY new ES anim, very witty as usual+Y
PA100 VTOL CONTEST Check out this new ES anim ! +Y
PA101 DOLPHIN DREAMS Great Dolphin anim! + Y
PA103/4 KINGFISHER 2 Superb bird animations!+ Y
PA106/7 THE JOURNEY Fab fractal pics & anims(2)+Y
PA118 3 SCHWARTZ Skydive,Soft landing & bomber! +Y
PA119 STEAM ANIMATION V2.0 Now with sound! +Y
PA120 TWO STROKE PETROL ENGINE Super anim+Y
PA122/3 THUNDERBIRDS ANIM Nice animation! (2)+Y
PA141 STIRLING II ENGINE Another fab engine anim!+Y
PA142 NIGHTBREED AGA FRACTAL FLIGHT Colourful! Y
PA143 XMAS ANIMATION Amusing animation! +Y
PA145 SUNJETS ANIM Nice anim of jet planes! +Y
PA146 FLY ANIM Biplane loops the loop!(not 1.3)+Y
PA147 EARTH ANIM Fast frame pics of Earth(not 1.3)+Y
PA148 CIRCUS ANIMATION Humerous looped anim! +Y

POWER ANIMATIONS

PP001/2 ANTI LEMMINGS (2) This is Brilliant! 2M
PP003 AT THE MOVIES anim of Amy squirrel 1.5M+Y
PP004/7 AUTOMATED LIGHT (4) Battlestar galactica! 3M
PP006/10 BUZZED (3) Great anim of wasp crashing! 2M
PP011/12 DATING GAME (2) Very witty!, Get it. 3.5M!
PP016 GULF WAR Another ES production! Good 2M! Y
PP021/4 LANDING (4)Tobias Richter poweranim 4M!
PP025/27 STATION AT KHARN (3) Incredible 2M demo Y
PP036/7 WALKER DEMO (2) A 2mg version of a classic!
PP040/43 AT THE MOVIES II (4) Hilarious ! 1mg>3mg
PP044/45 AMY V WALKER II (2) witty ES demo 3M
PP046 SWEET REVENGE Coyote vsRoadrunner! 1.5mg+Y
PP050 UNSPORTING Wicked Schwartz cartoon+ 2M Y
PP051/2 CHARLY CAT Super Shwartzlike cartoon! 2mg Y
PP053/4 CHARLY CAT AT THE BEACH 2nd anim 2mg!Y
PP057/9 CHARLY CAT CATCHES A CANARY Fab! 3MG.
PP060/3 CHARLY CAT MOUSTERMIND Great! 3.5MG.
PP064 DUNCAN DUNG BEETLE Unusual 2mg anim! Y
PP065/6 CHARLY CAT SNOWJOKE Latest anim 2mg.+ Y
PP067/9 SPEED LIMIT 3mg motorcycle race! + Y (3)
PP070/1 LEMMINGS REVENGE amusing anim! 2mg Y
PP074/6 G.I. SPY 3mg anim from charlie cat auther! (3)
PP077/84 THE HAUNTED Tremendous animation.3mg!(8)
PP088/9 SPORTING DOO DOO Nice animation! 2mg(2)
PP090/1 ROADHOG ANIM Very funny 2mg animation!(2)Y
PP099/100 AT THE FLIX Charlie cat again! (2) 2mg
PP101/4 QUALITY TIME Superb Shwartz 5mg anim (4)!
PP105/6 SATELITTES REVENGE Good anim!(2) 2M.
PP107 DAMBUSTERS Lancaster bomber fun! 2M.
PP108/10 CHARLY CAT IN SICKNESS & HEALTH!(3)3mg!
PP111/2 BUGSBUNNY&SPACEMEN Action 2(2)mgY
PP113/4 CALVIN & HOBBES Super animation!(2) 3mg.
PP115/6 SPAR TREK3 BATTLESTATIONS Fun! 2mg (2)
PP117/8 PRANK ON FURBALL Cat has a pizza! 2mg (2)
PP119 BAITMASKING Another fun Shwartz anim 2mg(2)Y
PP120/3 LAST STAND ON HOTH Fab space anim!(4)3mg.
PP124/6 AFRODISIAC ANIM Superb anim, 3 disks & 3mg.

AGATRON(ok 1200)

AGA01 RED LOTUS Spinning down the road. Fantastic !+
AGA02 JET FIGHTER landing on a runway, basic anim +
AGA03 STAR TREK - Shuttle fly past - Great ! 1m +
AGA04 KLINGON CRUISER Flying around your screen !+
AGA05 STAR TREK KLINGON fires torpedoes 1m +
AGA06 LOGO, plus a great star wars fly by animation.+
AGA07 STAR WARS FIGHTER doing loops etc 1m +
AGA09 STAR WARS - Fighter fly by, impressive 1m +
AGA10 STAR TREK - Enterprise in dry dock. Incredible+
AGA11 TRON - Tank v Deactivator. Good vectors +
AGA12 TRON ANIMATION - Not one of the best +
AGA13 ROBO 1 A nice ray traced robot waving 1m +
AGA14 STAR TREK Workbee & Reliant. 3 shots +
AGA15 LOTUS CAR, Billiards, & Jet Fighter animations! +
AGA16 STAR TREK Various anims from star trek game.+
AGA17 STAR TREK TWOK animation Short but okay +
AGA18 STAR TREK - Enterprise fly by. Short anim +
AGA19 BOND ANIM - Copter plus a car, not too amazing+
AGA20 Huey 2 A helicopter leaving a landing pad.+
AGA21 ENTERPRISE DOCKING WITH SPACE STATION+
AGA22 ENTERPRISE APPROCHING stunning anim ! 1M +
AGA23 FLEET MANOEVRE Stunning animation! 1m +
AGA24 KULI PEN animation & Ping pong. Great! 1m +
AGA25 THE RUN , a suberb car chase 1mg +
AGA26 SHIP ROCKING at sea,/enterprise leaves dock+
AGA27 BOOK OPENING Nice anim of a book opening.+
AGA28 SHUTTLE & ENTERPRISE Fab anim by Richter+
AGA29 MILLENIUM FALCON The ship being chased -1M+
AGA30 HYPERSPACE anim+ Landing animation 1m +
AGA31 PORSCHE anim rising out of table 1 mg. +
AGA32 SPACE - Space probe flying away 1m +
AGA33 PROBE Bird of prey animation & Klingonhit! 1m+
AGA34 SPACE OFFICE Star trek anim, a little short +
AGA35 SPACE PROBE, fabt anim of probe zooming off!+
AGA36 BIRD OF PREY, loop the loop animation 1m +
AGA37 TOBIAS GOES KNACKERS Check this out ! 1m
AGA38 TOTALLY WICKED ! Shuttle & Enterprise (2 MEG)

FONTS (Bitmapped & assignable)

PU048 DYNAMITE FONTS II CutNPaste fontscreens Y
PU049 DYNAMITE FONTS More CutNPaste Fonts Y
PU058 FONTS AND RAM MANAGER BIG video fonts+
PU059 FONTS & SURFACES Backdrops & fonts+ Y
PU169 GELIGNITE FONTS CutNPaste fonts!+
PU175 GELIGNITE FONTS II Excellent IFF fonts+Y
PU176 GELIGNITE FONTS III More of above!!+
PU185/8 COSMOPOLITAN FONTS (4) Packed with fonts+Y
PU201 MALICE FONTS Exellent tiny fonts for Dpaint!+Y
PU226/7 C-EYES FONTS For use in Dpaint, WB, etc.(2)+Y
PU278 GELIGNITE FONTS IV Yes more iff fonts!
PU331/43 COLOUR FONTS(ASSIGNABLE)Dpaint etc(13) +Y
PU356 FONTFARM Contains 55 large & Small fonts! +Y
PU390 FONT FARM 2 Lots more good fonts! +Y
PU391 FONT FARM 3 Another disk crammed with fonts+Y

PROFESSIONAL FONTS

These fonts are for Professional page & Pagestream use only!

PU231/5 PAGESTREAM FONTS 5 disks full, super fonts!+ (5)Y
PU236/7 SCOPE197/8 Adobe type fonts, 2 disks full! +Y
PU257/61 PAGESTREAM FONTS 2nd set of good fonts.(5)+Y
PU264/8 OUTLINE FONTS For Pro pagev3 or 4(5) ONLY!!+Y
PU319/23 OUTLINE FONTS For Pro page 2.1 or 3!(5)+Y
PU403/7 OUTLINE FONTS For Pro pagev3 or 4 only!(5) +Y
PU408/12 MORE OUTLINE FONTS (As above) (5) +Y
PU413/7 MORE OUTLINE FONTS (AS above) (5) +Y
PU418 RUSSIAN FONTS Contains 3 Russian vector fonts! +Y

OCCULT,ASTRONOMY+PREDICTION

PU015 BIORYTHMS, STARCHART 2 Good programs+ Y
PU174 ASTRO 22 professional astrology now V3.5! +Y
PU211 AMIGA PUNT A horse race predicting program!+Y
PU212 PERM CHECK PLUS a pools prediction prog Y
PU213 RACE RATER Another horse racing program!! +Y
PU238 M.O.R.C.V2 rune caster,new 1 disk version!+Y
PU354 ASTRONOMY v2 calculate info on solar system! +Y
PU362 STARVIEW Gives view of star for given time etc!+Y
PU363 FORCASTER Horse racing prediction program! +Y
PU364 COURSE FORM Simple horse racing prediction!+Y
PU375 POOLS TOOLS2 3 pools related programs!+Y
PU377 MING SHU Makre your own horoscopes! +Y

MUSIC DISKS

PM001 100 GREATEST 64 TUNES 100 fab 64 tunes!+
PM010 AMEGA PARTY WINNERS Four WICKED songs+ Y
PM016 BEATLES SONIX Nice music +Y
PM018 BEATMASTER I LOVE TECHNOLOGY Rave ! +Y
PM019 BRUNO's MUSIC BOX II Super jazz funk music +Y
PM020/21 BRUNOS MUSIC BOX III Jazzfunk. Get it ! +Y
PM058 MAG FIELDS CHIP FESTIVAL Full of chip music+Y
PM059 MANIACS OF NOISE This is brilliant!+
PM074 SOUND OF SILENTS Just get this its mega!
PM092 PIANO TUNES Nine piano songs- good + Y
PM098 STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN Rendition of the song+Y
PM104 500 THINGS COMEBACK 4 great rave type tracks+
PM112 TECHOMANIA II 8 essential hardcore tunes+
PM122/4 PLAYSID 2 (3) You must get this !!!! +Y
PM125 PLAYSID inc.RobHubbard, ManiacsOfNoise + Y
PM154 PULSE Yes, pulsating rave music again!! +Y
PM155 VINE G-RAVE 5 more good rave tracks!!! +Y
PM162 MORE MED TUNES Fab tunes by Alex Starrex!+Y
PM164 OCTAROCK 3D More 8 track & 3d graphics!+Y
PM167/8 JESUS ON ES Crazy rave music demo! +(2)
PM179 PLAYSID V2.2 More old 64 style music!(not1.3) +Y
PM185 ASI MUSIC VOL1 4 big songs with hifi graphics+Y
PM186 ASI MUSIC VOL2 7 songs with hifi graphics! +Y
PM190/1 DANCE TRASH 2 disk set of rave music!(2) +Y
PM192 HOBBITS & SPACESHIPS music by Dr Awsome+Y
PM194/5 ULTIMATE ACTION MEGA MUSIC Fab (2)+Y
PM196 MUSIC OF ROMEO KNIGHT Suber music mods+Y
PM198/9 MIRAGE SUBLIMINAL XTC Fab rave(1200only)
PM200 DATA-X TRILOGY 3 raved up pieces! +Y
PM201 DATA-X THE VICTIM 6 more music tracks! +Y
PM202 XENO INFINITY Good techno funk track!(not1.3)
PM203 BIO MECHANOID SYMPHONY NO 1 (1200only)
PM204 PE MUSIC MADNESS 50 chip music tunes! +Y
PM205 DESERT TECHNO TRAX 6 techno-ish tunes! +Y
PM206/7HEMOROIDS ENDLESS MELODIS 14 tunes(2)+Y
PM208 CHRISTMAS TUNES Medley with modern beat!+Y
PM209 LSD XMAS PACK Great selection of xmas tunes+Y
PM210 AMIGA XMAS MUSIC Superb traditional style+Y

MUSIC UTILITIES

PT002 ART OF MED Excellent music !+ Y
PT006 DELUXE MUSIC DATADISK For DMCS. +Y
PT009 K1 IFF SAMPLES Fabulous samples +
PT011 KAWAI K1 editor for patch changes!
PT012 KAWAI K4 editor as above!
PT013 MED 3.2 Excellent music seq. + Y
PT015 MIDI DISK Various midi stuff +
PT020 ST-01 - ST-10 Samples--Ring for details
PT025/6/7/8 ST-90-93 SAMPLES Studio quality+ Y
PT029 YAMAHA DX7 VOICE FILER for DX7 synths!
PT030 YAMAHA DX7 VOICE SORTER for the above !
PT031/2/3 ST-87 - 89 3 disks full !+Y
PT034/5 ST-97 & 98 More samples !+Y
PT038 YAMAHA DX100,TX81Z, DX27,DX11 & FB01 editor
PT040 OCTAMED V2 8 channel MED sequencer!+
PT041 NOISEPLAYER 4.0 Multitasking module player+
PT042 START IFF SAMPLES Superb ! Get this disk!+Y
PT043/5 HOUSE SAMPLES 3 disks full of house samples
PT046 AUDIO MAGIC3 Super trackers disk, ok on 1200+Y
PT047 AUDIO MAGIC4 More Superb music programs! + Y
PT048/52 MODULES 5 disks of large music modules!+Y
PT053/57 METAL MODULES 5 disks heavy rock/metal! +Y
PT058/62 BREAK BEATS 5 disks of drum samples+Y
PT063/67 VOCALS 5 disks of super vocal samples!+Y
PT068/70 DRUMKITS 3 disks of high quality drums!+Y
PT071/73 KORG SAMPLES 3 disks of keyboard sounds+Y
PT074/76 PURE SAMPLES Lots of assorted samples!+Y
PT077 SAMPLE FACTORY Disk full of sound effects!+Y
PT078 CHIPMAN SAMPLES over 70 samples here!+Y
PT080 XI RAVE SAMPLES Bass & Drums! +Y
PT081 SAMPLEMAKER V3.1 Make samples, +Y
PT082 CLASSICAL MODULES On a classical theme! +Y
PT083 MUSIC ENGINE V1.34 Multiformat music player+Y
PT085 NO SAMPLER UTILITIES Music utilities! +Y
PT086 CHIPMAN SAMPLES II More samples! +Y
PT087 CHURCH MUSIC Religious sonix music! +Y
PT088 X-BEAT V1.1 Exellent drum machine program!+Y
PT089 AUDIO MAGIC5 Some new tracker programs.+Y

VISA MasterCard

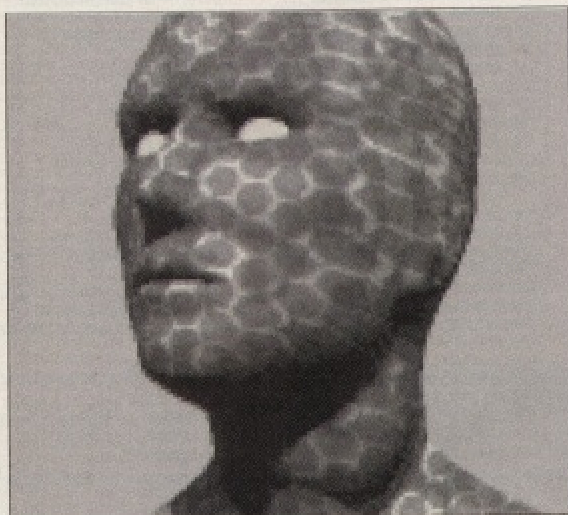
NBS
UF/23, 1CHAIN LANE, NEWPORT
I.W. PO30 5QA
TEL: 0983 529 594
FAX:0983 821 599

VALLY PD
UF/23, PO BOX 15, PETERLEE
CO. DURHAM SR8 1NZ
TEL:091 587 1195
FAX:091 587 1195

BLITTERCHIPS
UF/23, CLIFFE HOUSE, PRIMROSE
STREET ,KEIGHLEY, BD21 4NN.
TEL: 0535 667 469
FAX: 0535 667 469

PD SCENE

It's all here in PD Scene this month: banging techno, 3D animations, slideshows, games, girlies, [not any more – Lisa] and stuff, as selected by Tony Horgan.



MEAN CD MACHINE

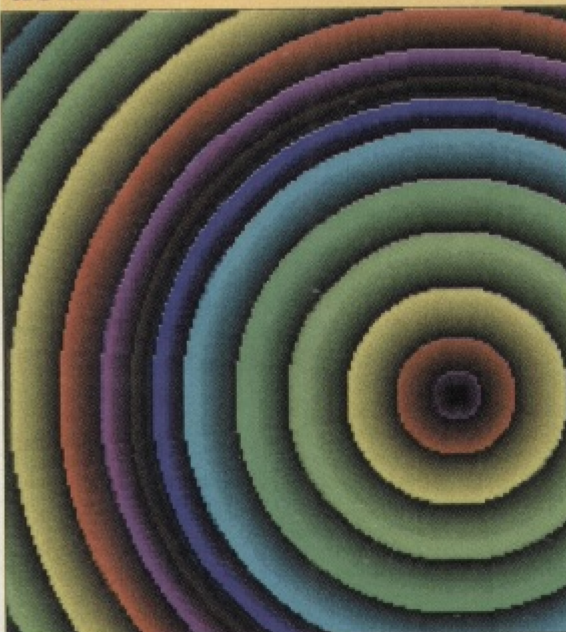
animation

This is another strange animation from Craig Collins. It's a kind of "my computer's better than yours" argument put into the form of a car race. Confused? Let me explain. There are three sports cars on the starting grid, and one by one the inferior capabilities of the lesser cars (tagged MegaCD and and CDI) lead them to drop out of the race, resulting in the CD32 car winning the race. I know it sounds a bit naff, but there's excellent ray-tracing going on there, which will have 3D fans foaming at the mouth. Unfortunately, you'll need 1Mb of Chip RAM and 3Mbs of Fast RAM to run it.

Available from: 17 Bit Software, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 1DH. Tel: 0924 366982. Disk nos. 2872 a+b+c+d (4 disks). Price: £6.50 including P+P.

XANADU

demo



Another one for you lucky A1200 owners, Xanadu is a series of slick effects that go just that little bit further than most. It kicks off with a good colour-cycled tunnel, followed by a very tasty doughnut effect that has colour rings warping in and out of each other. Then there's the favourite spinny cube, and another cube that pokes its corners through some black and white patterns. The obligatory real-time rotational bitmap zoom puts in an appearance before a big glenz, some RGB filters and a ray-traced Commodore logo round it off. Not a bad effort in all, but it tails off a bit towards the end.

Available from: Visage Computers, 18 Station Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 5LD. Tel: 0602 444501.Price: £2.00 including P+P.

79%

MAD FIGHTERS A1200

game

Street Fighter II Amiga was a bit rubbish really wasn't it? Didn't it embarrass you when your SNES-owning mate came round to gloat? Well this could have been a chance to get your own back – a 1200-specific *SFII* ripoff – but unfortunately this also moves around with as much style and grace as a drunken rhino.

Mad Fighters has potential though. The PD version gives you a choice of four fighters from the sixteen available in the registered version. Apart from the slightly rough graphics, there's everything here to make a good *SFII* clone, apart from smooth animation. To keep the speed up, all the sprites jerk around the screen in massive steps. The sound effects have been sampled straight from *SFII*. *Mad Fighters* is one of those games that's impressive, but only because it's PD, so don't get your hopes up too much.

Available from: Roberta Smith DTP, 190 Falloden Way, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, NW11 6JE. Disk no. RGA 034. Price: £1.40 including P+P.

60%



SEKTOR MIX

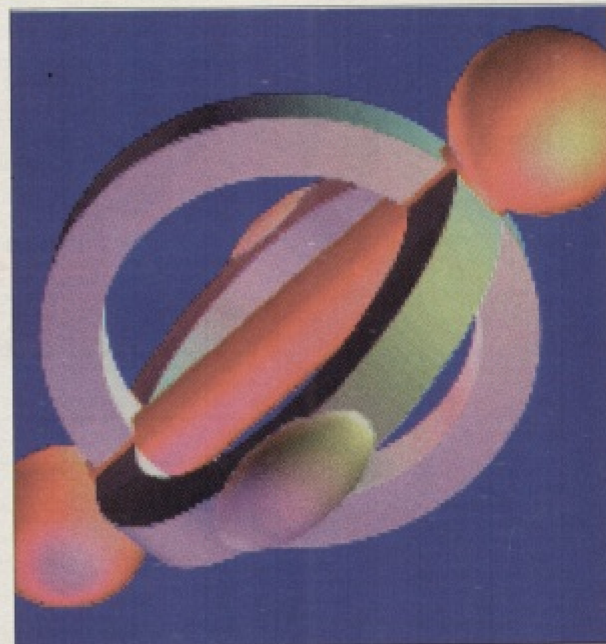
demo

You know the score: hardcore tunes and strobey graphics. So what's new? Well, not much really. Some of the graphics aren't bad, like the colour-cycled pulsing tunnels, but some of the others are a bit flat. The music? It's nothing special, and although it has the odd good bit, a lot of the sounds are knocking on a bit, especially the drum loops. You'd do better to go for Techno Tracks 2 instead.



Available from: Computa Stuff, 81 Orsett Road, Grays, RM17 SHH. Tel: 0375 392345. Price:£2.00 including P+P.

65%



THE MINI AGA SLIDESHOW

slideshow

With all this talk of 24-bit graphics boards, it's easy to forget what the new AGA graphics modes are capable of.

This slideshow from Karl Moore has some good examples of HAM-8 ray-traced images, although the subjects are pretty run-of-the-mill. Still, all the pictures are very clean, and should be enough to persuade any unconverted ray-tracers that they must have an AGA Amiga.

Available from: Cynostic PD, Office O1, New Enterprise Centre, Little Heath Industrial Estate, Old Church Road, Coventry, CV6 7NB. Disk nos. P0076 (2 disks). Tel:0203 681 687 Price: £3.50 including P+P.

79%

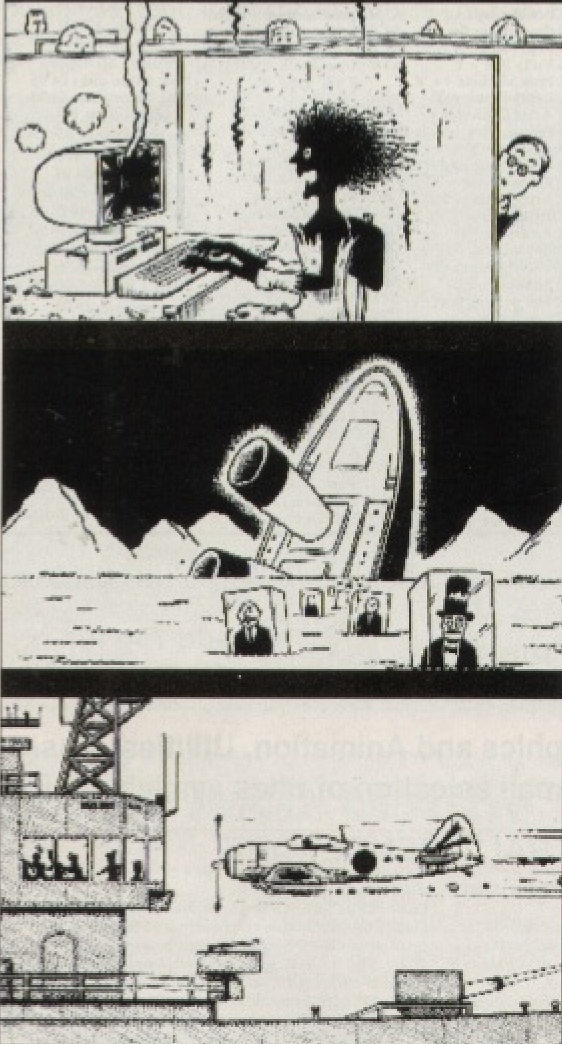
UNPLEASANT WAYS TO DIE

slideshow

Curiously enough, this is a slideshow of cartoons depicting various unpleasant ways to die. Yes, it's true that most of them are rather unpleasant. In fact some are positively horrid, although none of them are too sick. The cartoon graphics are crisper than a sock that's been down the back of the radiator for a week but some of them are actually quite funny. There are plenty of them on there too.

Available from: Cynostic PD, Office O1, New Enterprise Centre, Little Heath Industrial Estate, Old Church Road, Coventry, CV6 7NB. Disk no. P0079. Price: £2.00 including P+P.

88%



TECHNO TRACKS 2

music demo

Now this I like. It's not another hardcore demo like all the rest, it's actually got some good original ideas in there. The soundtrack is banging techno for the most part, while the graphics are a mix of hypnotic colour effects and plasma, with fractals, wobbly bits and various other demo effects thrown in and strobed together. At the end it gets all chilled out and trancey with a simple but very effective colour-cycled plasma fractal screen. Yummy.

Available from: Cynostic PD, Office O1, New Enterprise Centre, Little Heath Industrial Estate, Old Church Road, Coventry, CV6 7NB. Disk no. P0079. Price: £2.00 including P+P.

90%



MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE

demo

You get a new original demo and what happens? Someone comes out with an inferior copy before you can blink. Maximum Overdrive was inspired by Fairlight's 242 demo featured in last October's PD Scene. Like 242, it's a long digitised animation seen in spooky green-o-vision, but unlike 242, it needs about 2Mbs to run, and even then it's quite a mission to get it working.

The mini-film, transferred from a camcorder into compressed Amiga graphics, is without any particular theme. A bunch of likely lads jump into a Mk1 Cortina or thereabouts, and drive down the road. No, hang on, it gets even more rivetting in a minute...then someone stands in front of the camera and pulls unamusing faces. If you haven't seen the 242 demo, I suppose this would look quite good, but it's inferior and so seems a bit pointless really. Don't let me put you off though, it's probably just because it's Monday and I'm a miserable sod.

Available from: Visage Computers, 18 Station Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 5LD. Tel: 0602 444501. Price: £2.00 including P+P.

78%

CONTACTS

To help you get the most from the public domain, here is a list of the main PD distributors. Should you require anything that's not reviewed in these pages, contact any of the following libraries who will be more than willing to help.

Blitterchips
Cliffe House
Primrose St
Keighley
BD21 4NN
Tel: 0535 667 469

CPPD
3 Dunedin
Crescent
Winshill
Burton-on-Trent
Staffs
Tel: 0283 516736

Diskovery
108 The Avenue
Clayton
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD14 6SJ
Tel: 0274 880 066

First Choice
The Orchard
139 Highridge
Green
Bishopsworth
Bristol BS13 8AB
Tel: 0374 446776

Five Star PD
48 Nemesia
Amignton
Tamworth
B77 4EL
Tel: 0827 68496

Ground Zero
4 Chandos Road
Redland
Bristol
BS6 6TE
Tel: 0272 732978

Orion PD
14 Ouston Close
Wardley
Gateshead
Tyne and Wear
NE10 8DZ
Tel:091 4385021

NBS
1 Chain Lane
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 5QA
Tel: 0983 529 594

PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue
Southend on Sea
Essex
SS1 2YD
Tel: 0702 466933

Seventeen Bit Software
1st Floor Offices
2/8 Market Street
Wakefield
West Yorks
WF1 1DH
Tel: 0924 366982

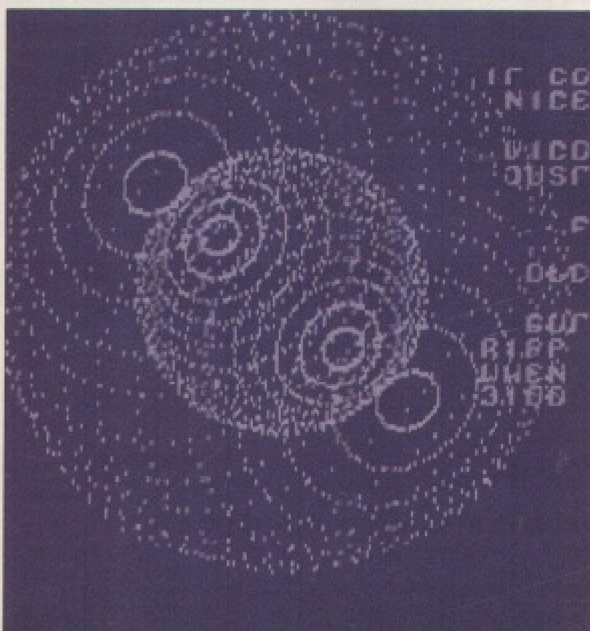
South Lincs PD
10 Linden Rise
Bourne
Lincs
PE10 9TD
Tel: 0778 393470

Strictly PD
11 York Place
Brandon Hill
Hotwells
Bristol
BS1 5UT
Tel: 0272 250992

The One Stop PD Shop
39 Lambton
Road
Charlton
Manchester
M21 12J
Tel: 061 370 9115

Virus Free PD
31 Farringdon
Road
Swindon
Wilts
SM1 SAR
Tel: 0793 432176

Valley PD
PO Box 15
Peterlee
SR8 1NZ
Tel: 091 587 1195



PRO SIAK

Demos

Demos are still kicking it, as this production from Flying Cows Inc proves. It's brief, but hits hard with a stream of dramatic effects and a buzzy synthy technoid soundtrack.

The *Imagine* cow spins around various sections of the demo, which includes some dated sine-plot patterns, but the quality improves with ray-traced animations, tunnels and wibbly bits. It ends with an excellent new effect that seems to be some kind of fractal zoom, but looks very like a political map of Europe or something. Very strange.

Available from: Cynostic PD, Office O1, New Enterprise Centre, Little Heath Industrial Estate, Old Church Road, Coventry, CV6 7NB. Disk no. D0569. Price: £2.00 including P+P.

79%

PD UTILITIES

So now you're skint, but you could do with a new word processor/database or Black and Decker sander. Let Tony Horgan recommend some cheap PD alternatives.

FORMS REALLY UNLIMITED 1.04

form designer

Designing your own stationery is a good way of saving money if your business is run on a tight budget. Forms Really Unlimited lets you do just that. It's easy to use. You start with a blank screen, onto which you can type any text you like. The menus are used to select basic formatting options, such as drawing out lines and boxes. With these simple tools you can design invoices, application forms and so on within minutes. It's hardly the most comprehensive program around, but should suffice for basic requirements.

Available from: Cynostic PD, Office O1, New Enterprise Centre, Little Heath Industrial Estate, Old Church Road, Coventry, CV6 7NB. Disk no. U0257. Price: £2.00 including P+P.

68%

Copyright 1990 | FORMS REALLY UNLIMITED Vers:1.04 | Date: 01/10/90

From: A.H.Meek. 247 Lichfield Road, Rushall, Walsall. West Midlands. WS4 1EA.

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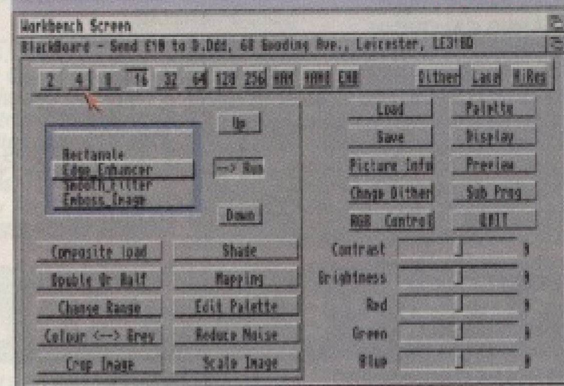
BLACKBOARD

image processor

You don't get many PD image processors, so I was surprised to find Blackboard in this month's postbag. It's primarily designed for AGA machines and 24-bit graphics, but can work with images using anything from 2 to 16 million colours, in low-res, hi-res and interlace modes. At present, there aren't that many processes available, but the main ones are in there, such as emboss, edge detect, and sliders for you to alter the luminance and colour balance. A registered version is available for £10, and it's probably worth sending off for, especially if you want to see it developed further in future to support additional effects, file formats and so on.

Available from:17 Bit Software, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 1DH. Tel: 0924 366982. Disk no. 2833. Price: £2.00 including P+P.

82%



READ AND LEARN

education

The old Three Little Pigs story comes to your Amiga with Read and Learn. Instead of simply being a series of pictures and text, it actually reads the story out to you. Unlike some similar programs that you might have seen in the past, Read and Learn does not use the Amiga's awful speech synthesiser, but a sampled voice of someone reading the story as it should sound. This has the advantage that you can actually understand what's being said. The graphics aren't the best you've ever seen, but at least they're colourful, and they get the story across without any problem. As education software goes, this isn't bad at all, mostly because it doesn't make the mistake of pretending to be *Super Marioland* when it's not. A good bit of fun.

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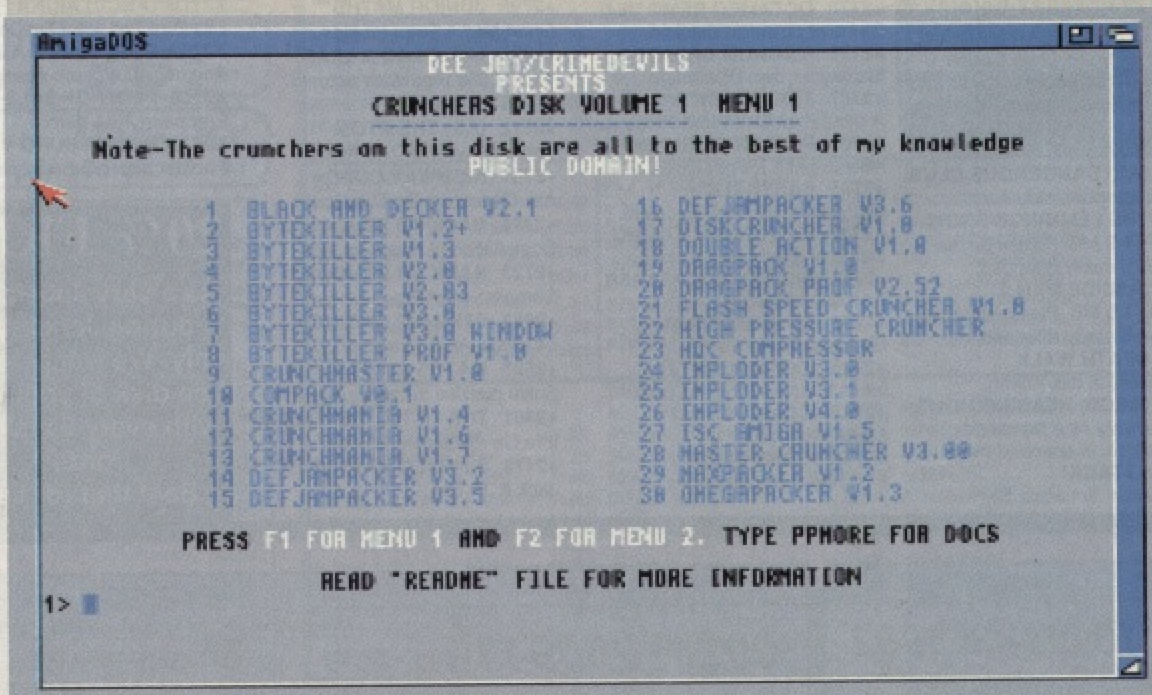
CRIME DEVILS CRUNCHERS

utility compilation

Crunchers are handy things, allowing you to squeeze far more data on a disk than you should really be able to. This disk from Crime Devils has no less than 30 crunchers on it and if you can't find one that suits you from that lot, then you must be a pretty picky customer.

Available from: Computer and Design Services, 24 Blackmoor Croft, Tile Cross, Birmingham, 33 OPE. Tel: 021 779 6368. Price £1.50 including P+P.

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Nice Mods from various games.
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Another Great Demo
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+2746 TECHNO MODULES *4
+2745 TECHNO MODULES *3
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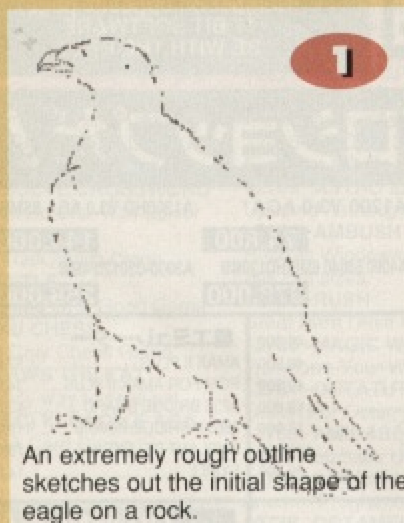


CASPAR

Aaah, said everyone in the office (apart from Tony Dillon who has a hard, metal image to uphold, and therefore never shows emotion) at little Caspar, whom I can only assume is Sammy's cat , Sammy being the artist behind this simple but extremely effective image.

GOLDEN EAGLE

It's Christopher Munasinha again, with his rendition of a poster given away by *Quest.* magazine, drawn in 32 colours in lowres mode.



1 An extremely rough outline sketches out the initial shape of the eagle on a rock.



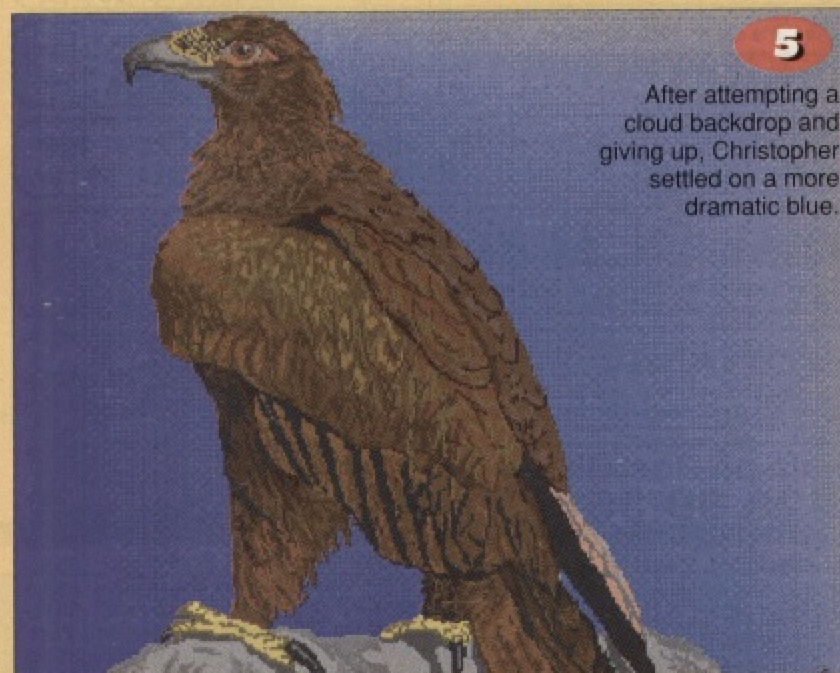
2 The outline has been clearly defined now, and an initial colour test is placed in the form of a shaded neck



3 By blocking out the main colour areas, Christopher is able to clearly define his palette.



4 The whole eagle has now been sketched in. The feathers were drawn by making small 'v' shapes with the free-hand tool.



5 After attempting a cloud backdrop and giving up, Christopher settled on a more dramatic blue.

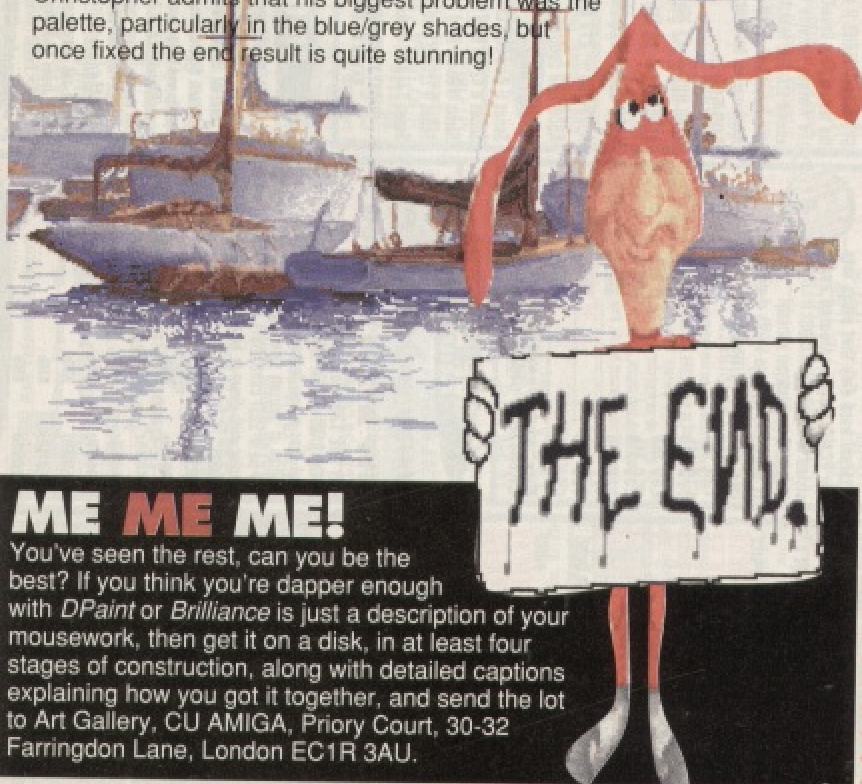
BY SCOTT MARTINDALE





DREAMBOAT

This is an interesting one. Where the rest of the world seems bent on imitating Boris Vallejo or Dave Gibbons, Christopher Minasinha of Kenton in Harrow has taken a leaf out of Carlton Cards, and done a digital rendition of a birthday card, code 55. Done mainly in magnify mode, Christopher admits that his biggest problem was the palette, particularly in the blue/grey shades, but once fixed the end result is quite stunning!



ME ME ME!

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CU AMIGA SPECIAL

Welcome to our new look readers' offers. This month sees the launch of our new upgrades for the Amiga A1200.

Unlike some A1200 upgrades, ours are fully PCMCIA compatible. Designed and built in the UK exclusively for CU Amiga - never has it been so affordable to upgrade an A1200 with more memory on a board also capable of adding a 68882 floating point maths co-processor at speeds of up to 50MHz.

How can we be so cheap? Well, thanks to the huge success of our campaign to upgrade all Amigas to a minimum of 1Mb, we have exceptional buying power. Also, because so many of our readers buy upgrades we can use the very latest manufacturing technology to produce our upgrades - and hence give you exceptional value.

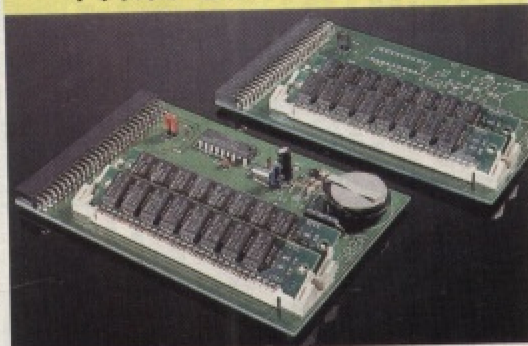
So why upgrade your memory? Probably because a memory upgrade is the most versatile enhancement you can make to your Amiga. Apart from the fact that you need it to run the more powerful Amiga software there are many extra benefits too. You can use some of it as a RAM disk, just like a super-fast extra floppy drive. This means you can avoid the cost of a second floppy drive or hard disk. Some software that claims to need a hard disk will run on your Amiga from a RAM disk. A print spooler can save you time waiting for your printer to finish printing before you get on with your work, use your new RAM instead of upgrading your printer or buying an expensive buffer.

For reasons best known to themselves, Commodore 'forgot' a realtime clock for the A1200. Well, we've put it back with our new UK made A1200 clock for just £12.99.

Getting more from your Amiga means at least 1Mb, getting the best means adding as much RAM as you can is the essential Amiga upgrade!

MEMORY

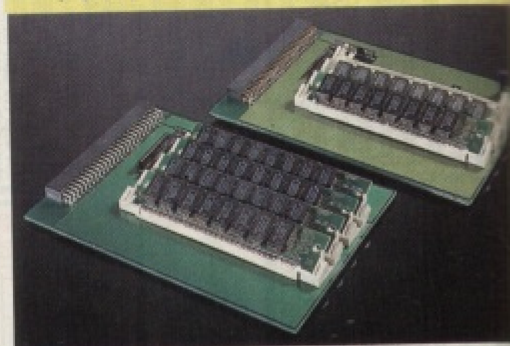
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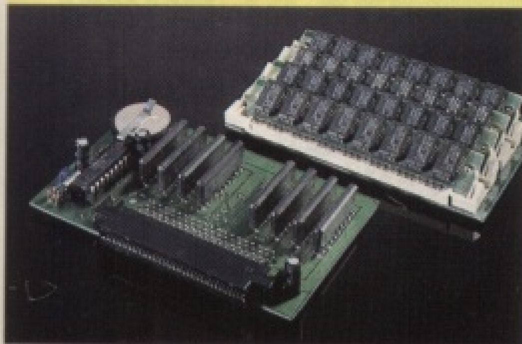
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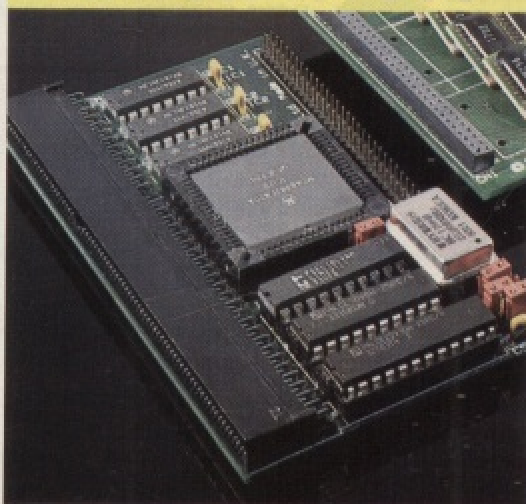
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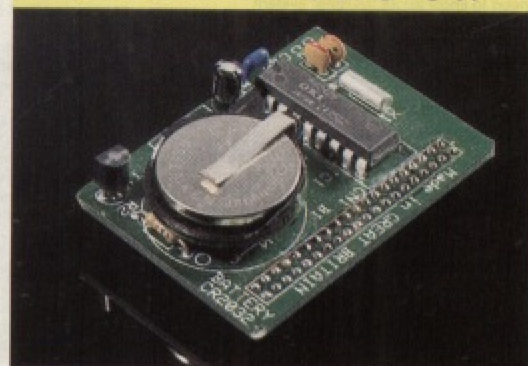
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AMIGA Workshop



ISSUE 14 FEBRUARY

If you've just bought an Amiga, or even if you've been using one for years, Amiga Workshop is the definitive guide to getting the most out of your computer. Throughout its fact-packed 32-pages, you'll find all manner of step-by-step tutorials, walk-throughs and guides to some of the most popular Amiga programs. Not only that, but there's also our Questions & Answers section, where our team of experts offer their help to all manner of computer-related problems, and the ever-popular Backchat pages where readers sound off about anything and everything... you have been warned!

Pete Lee's DPAINT AGA MASTERCLASS

Combining the tried and tested routines of one of the home computing's greatest art packages with exciting new modes, Electronic Arts have once again come up with a winner. You can be a winner, too, if you follow Peter Lee's new series of AGA artwork, which this month kicks off with a dazzling look at colour control.



The ability to work with 256 colours on screen is a real joy after being frugal with just 32 for everyday use in standard *DPaint*. Owners of the A1200 have a treasure-chest of colours to use, and you can see how realistic this makes images. Previously, this digitised picture would have had to be loaded into *DPaint IV*'s HAM mode to display it to any good advantage. This, however, is low res on the A1200 in 256 colour mode, and the problems of HAM have disappeared – no fringing or rogue pixels, just a joy to look at and work with.

As you can see from this enlargement, everything's pixel-perfect. Translucency was used. to achieve this effect. Having written the text, cut it out as a brush, and select Colour from the Mode menu (or press key F2). Switch on Translucency, and give it a setting of 30 something (making it fairly opaque). Now, with black selected as your foreground colour, the text becomes solid black. Paint it on the screen, and the Translucency will darken what's underneath, creating a 'shadow' on which you can place the text (after turning off Translucency and pressing F1 to return the brush to its original colour).

PART 1

Almost as many Amiga 1200s landed on the table this Christmas as stuffed turkeys. Well, maybe not – but it was boom time for Commodore as their home-computer flagship sold like hot cakes. And among the packaging and manuals, many new users would have found a copy of the AGA version of *Deluxe Paint* in the software bundle.

Or, maybe like me, you've decided to upgrade your Amiga to take advantage of 32-bit computing, and the lure of an improved version of *Deluxe Paint*. Whichever the case, the aim of this series is to explore the power available with the release of *DPaint AGA*.

For newcomers, we'll be covering some of the basics, and for old hands we'll be uncovering some of the subtle and more powerful effects which have now become available.

STARTING OUT

When you first start *DPaint AGA* you come across a mode requester panel, with details of available screen modes on the left, and info about their configuration on the right. Apart from considerations of your display (some modes require high-performance monitors) you have to make your decision based on your drawing needs.

Want to create a long animation? Need thousands of colours? These are the type of questions which will affect your choice of mode. The rule of thumb is that the higher the resolution, or the greater the number of colours, or the larger your animation plans, the more memory you'll need. And even though your A1200 may have come with 2Mb of RAM, this will be whittled away as soon as *DPaint* begins to eat into it. So you have to compromise – don't be too greedy. To begin with, choose a low res mode and don't ask for 256 colours unless you'll need them. True, your effects will be subtler with more colours, but you are eating into any memory you may need for animation.



Here's an example of the effects of different settings on the Translucency function. Using the same band of test colours, but with different values, you can see that the higher the Translucency, the more of the underlying image shows through and the weaker the colour is painted from your brush.

Below the Screen Mode requester is a sliding bar showing the number of colours you want for your chosen mode. This ranges from 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128 to 256. For single screen work you may as well plump for 256 colours; but for animation, try and be a little more sparing, 64 colours is probably adequate for most things.

COLOURING IN

You'd think that with so many colours to choose from, you'd simply be able to pick up the right one from the palette. A lot of the time you can, but more often than not you will have to define either a single colour – the precise shade of green you need – or define a spread for some delicate blending.

Because of the vast range of colours available on the Amiga, *DPaint* offers a number of ways of getting the exact one you want. Calling up the Palette Requester (press the p key, or right click in the colour indicator section of the on-screen toolbox) allows you to select an existing colour, and edit it. You can do this by altering the Red, Green or Blue components, or its Hue, Saturation and Value. However, traditional artists aren't keen on this. So, instead, *DPaint* has a mixing box where you can paint colours on top of each other to blend them together. To activate this feature, access the Colour/Palette pull-down menu and highlight 'Mixer' on.

Now with one of the in-built brushes selected, you can paint with the current foreground colour in a 'safe' mixing area to the right of the requester, blending as many colours together as you like until you happen upon the precise shade you want. As it stands now, this colour only exists on the mixing pad (which doesn't reflect what's actually available to paint with).

To move it into the current palette, click on an existing palette colour you won't be needing, then click on the Pick button of the palette requester, and click with the pipette pointer on your new colour. Click on OK to return to your drawing, and your newly-invented colour will be ready for you to paint with.

RANGE RIDING

You'll find colour spreads vital in your artistic work. They help in the creation of effects such as translucency and tinting, and add subtelty to gradient fills. But it's a technique you need to work at if you're to achive the desired effect. If you want to tint a red object with white, to make it pink, there must be some kind of pink in your palette for the effect to work. *DPaint* can only use colours from your current palette.

It tries its best when overlaying one colour with another, but you will have to help in a big way. For example, if you wanted to add clouds or mist to a landscape view with lots of greenery and blue skies, you would either choose Translucency or Tint when painting over your existing picture with white or grey. But unless you have a range of whitish versions of your original colours in the palette, *DPaint* will only be able to do half the job. You will end up with an unconvincing patchwork of colours, with very little subtlety or definition.

So the best way to overcome this is to define a spread of colours starting with a green, or blue, and ending with the white or grey you intend using as your painting colour for the cloud. This will give *DPaint* much more scope when it comes to working out the colours. The Spreads and Ranges features on *DPaint AGA* can be created in two similar ways:

METHOD ONE

Choose Ranges from the colour menu, and a requester opens up showing a band of colours, and a placement bar above with dots representing the potential position of colours in the range under definition. You tell *DPaint* which range you are defining by sliding the Range button to edit »



Using an art program which doesn't think twice about using 256 colours means you don't have to worry too much about having some 'spares;' for special effects. Take this small example of Translucency. The main image is vibrant with colour, but still *DPaint AGA* manages to overpaint streaks of mist, using white as the colour, and Translucency set to 80.



Protecting colours is simply a matter of clicking on a colour in the Stencil requester. You can protect as many colours as you like, and by clicking on the actual image you can select colours too.

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- 3339 AMIGA BEGINNERS GUIDE
- 3417 BAD FORMAT
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- 3553 RANDOM QUOTER
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- 2748 INTENSE RAVE
- 2792 CUBIK TECHNO
- 2793 PARADISE TECHNO
- 2799 "MUSEUM '92"
  Nice music with some neat pix
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- 2930 SKETCH A TUNE
- 3093-2 SOUNDS OF SCIENCE
  A very popular title
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- 3399 "PERFECT 5"
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- 3667 INSECTOIDS 2^
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- 3353 CANON DRIVERS
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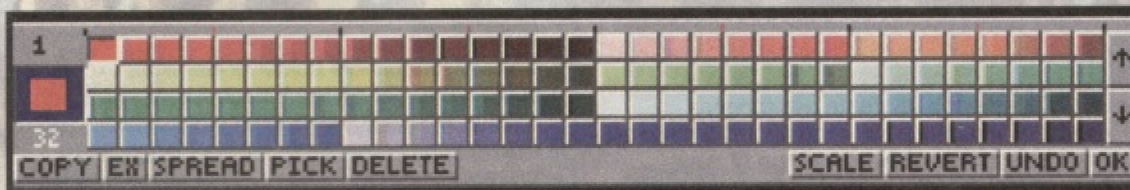
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DPaint AGA's colour arranger duplicates many functions found in the usual Palette control. The benefit it offers is in showing more colours on screen at once, so lengthy spreads of colours can be defined, and individual colours moved or copied precisely. It's vital to define colour spreads before defining a Range to give *DPaint* as much scope as possible in creating smooth transitions between colours. This is especially true if you intend using the Tint or Translucency functions to any degree. Not that each colour has a unique number, shown under the larger colour display square.



Here you can see *DPaint*'s famous colour trap – set to catch out the unwary. Having placed colours in the Range bar, and clicked on Show, you are given a dazzling display of all the colours available between the ones you've selected. But let's catch the reality train for a moment: the spread of reds and whites is what's available on the Amiga, not in your current palette. To find out how to beat this problem, check out the article.



All conventional artists mix colours. All the shades you want for an image just aren't available. Likewise with *DPaint AGA*. To get the perfect reddy-gold for that Autumnal scene, or the right cast of powder blue for a snow shadow, requires some work in the colour mixing department. That's it to the right of the slider bars. You can paint there with any colour from the palette, and mix them together until the right shade is reached. Don't forget to then pick the colour and place it in your palette so it's available to paint with.

» the current number. You may define up to eight ranges at any one time.

To put a colour on the placement bar, just click on the colour bar and your cursor changes to a colour bead. Click this where you want it on the placement area. Click on another colour, and do the same – now click on Show and *DPaint* will give you the best spread of colours between the two you have placed. If, for instance, you had placed white at the right hand end of the placement bar, and green at the other, the range would spread from the two colours, with the mid-point showing a light green.

TIP: because you can place as many colours on the bar as you like, you can build in highlights. Put dark and light green colours at either end of the bar, and put white in the middle. When you show this a smooth gradient will be displayed of greens with a bright highlight in the middle. This is very useful when you intend drawing pseudo solid objects: pillars or metallic objects for instance.

NOTE: Unless you are in HAM mode (which hopefully you won't be just yet) the gradient displayed in the Show area is the best range possible from the Amiga's vast palette, not your current palette. This disturbing fact leads us onto the other, safer way of defining a range (or spread) of colours, which has more to do with the real world than this kind of fantasy island approach.

METHOD TWO

By calling up the Arrange requester from the Colour/Palette menu item you are presented with controls which govern your actual palette. You will see 126 colours displayed at once, and you can scroll through the remainder by clicking on the direction arrows in the requester. The command buttons at the lower left duplicate many of the functions found in the palette requester, but for now our main interest is in the Spread button.

By clicking on a colour, then on this button, then on a final colour you can create an actual spread of colours in your palette.

So really, creating Ranges in *DPaint AGA* is more complicated than you may at first think. To get anything like the spread of colours optimistically displayed in the Range requester, you should firstly create actual spreads of those colours in either the Palette requester itself, or the way I prefer, in the Arrange palette requester, which shows more colours on screen at once, so is easier to define large spreads.

It also means you are not likely to come a cropper by selecting too ambitious a Range, containing colours which bear no resemblance to your actual palette.

PROTECTION RACKET

With 256 colours to play with in Low Res mode, using the familiar *DPaint* Stencil control might have turned into a nightmare. The fact that it didn't is thanks to a continuing user-friendly approach by the programmers.

A stencil is a colour which you can protect from being overpainted or cleared, and to activate the Stencil call up its requester with the Effect/Stencil/Make pull-down menu option. This brings up a requester showing all the colours in your palette, and you can protect any number by simply clicking on the colour. But with 256, it's often difficult to work out precisely which shade of a colour to protect.

The trick is that you can select colours from your actual screen – move the pointer anywhere on your image, click, and the corresponding colour becomes tagged in the Stencil requester. The Invert button allows you to reverse the stencil – it unprotects protected colours, and protects the unprotected. This is useful if you want to preserve the majority of colours without the hassle of clicking 200 odd times. Simply click on the colours you don't want protected, and click on Invert. Another invaluable aid is to Paint an area on screen to protect. This is accessed from the Effect/Stencil pull-down menu too, and allows you to work on a dimmed screen and paint areas of your image which will remain intact while the stencil is active.

So protection based on complex shapes, rather than colour, can be achieved. You can Paint protect areas using an in-built brush, or any fill tool. CU

***Deluxe Paint AGA* comes bundled with the A1200. However, if you wish to buy it separately, you can do so by contacting Electronic Arts on tel:0753 549442, price: £99.99.**

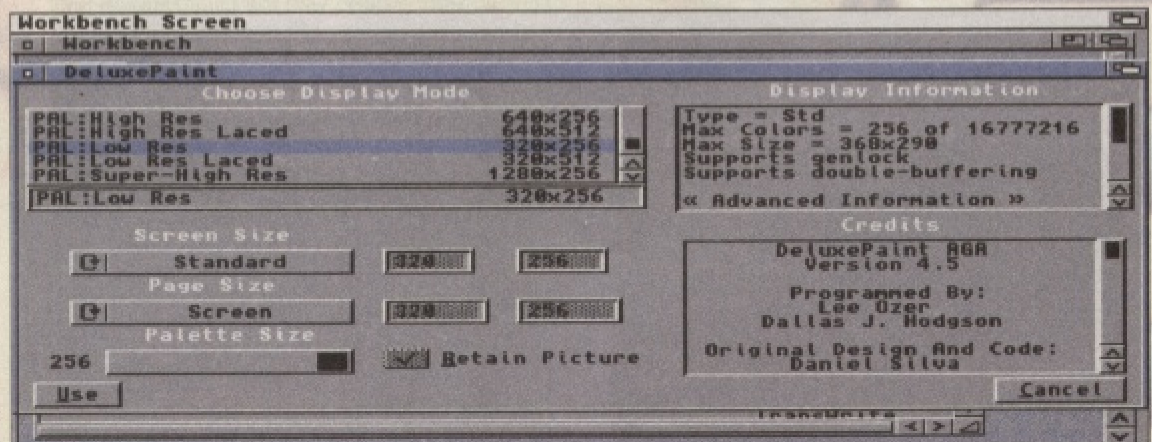
JARGON BUSTERS

AGA: stands for Advanced Graphic Architecture. This is a new custom chipset inside the Amiga, and provides greater graphic capabilities such as more variety of display modes and greater numbers of colours are the main benefits to *DPaint* users.

Older Amigas, though excellent for graphic use, could display a maximum 4096 colours at any one time. This was in Hold and Modify (HAM) mode, which restricted the quality of the finished work. AGA, however, now allows up to 256 colours from a palette of 16.8million colours at any one time in standard mode. The enhanced HAM modes of the new chipset (Ham-8 specifically) can display over 256,000 colours on screen at once in any display resolution.

NEXT MONTH

The Peter Lee masterclass continues next issue as Peter details how to set up *DPaint* the way you want it. We'll also be showing you how to use the vast new palette in creating stunning colour cycling techniques.



Lovely isn't it? All those modes and colours on the A1200, available through DPaint AGA. Your choice of mode should be governed firstly by what you want to achieve, and secondly by memory constraints. You may find that animating *Star Wars* in 256 colours is a bit beyond the 2Mb barrier. Animated frames eat up a lot of precious memory, so you'll maybe have to compromise with fewer colours or the lowest possible resolution. But for single screen artistry, 256 colours are a must.

MASTERING DPAINT AGA

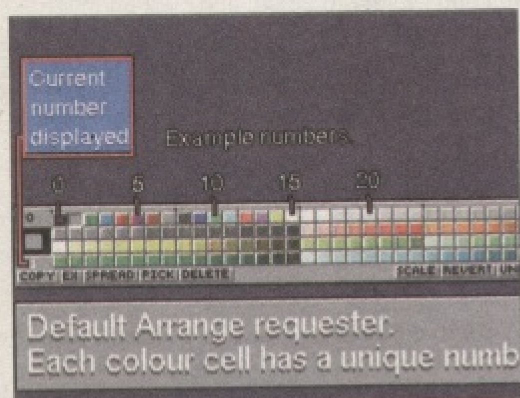
TUTORIAL ONE

Each month we'll be inviting you to undertake a painting project with us, which as well as giving you step-by-step instructions on how to create special effects, introduces you to the finer points of *DPaint AGA*. This way you can learn about the program and how to create your own terrific images at the same time. A simple image to begin with, but one which combines some of the subtleties we've covered in the main article. We're going to let *DPaint* do almost all of the work as we create a simple illuminated scene.

STEP 1

In the article on the previous pages I explained how to create ranges and spreads of colours. We need to create two distinct ranges/spreads for this image – one will be a series of greys for the candle, the other a range of golds for the candle holder.

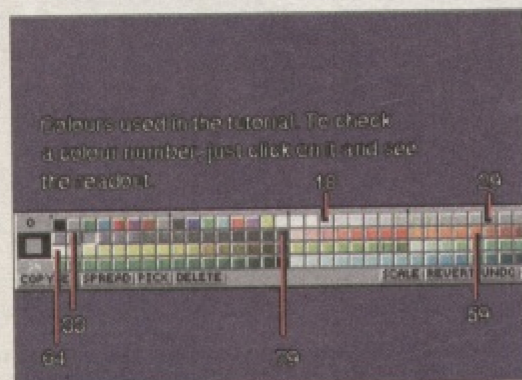
So begin with a blank screen, and *DPaint*'s default palette (the one it uses every time you run it). Now call up the Arrange requester (Colour/Palette/Arrange pull-down menu).



Default Arrange requester.
Each colour cell has a unique numb

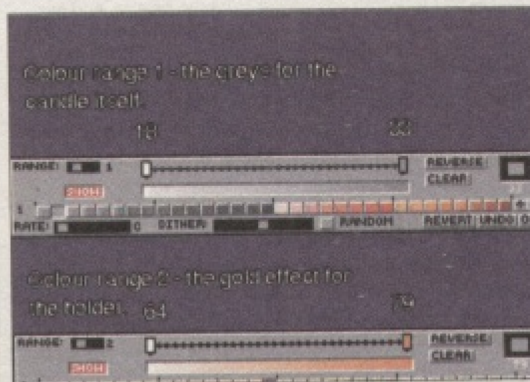
STEP 2

A spread of 16 colours for each range should be sufficient, The grey spread should begin with colour number 18, and end with colour no. 29. To do this, leave 18 alone, but click on colour 29, then click on Copy and click on slot 33. Now create a Spread from 33 to 18. Likewise with the gold. Make your starting colour 64, and move colour 59 to slot 79. Make the spread from 64 to 79. You will find that each colour's number is displayed under the large current colour square. Click around the requester to find out how the colours are numbered.



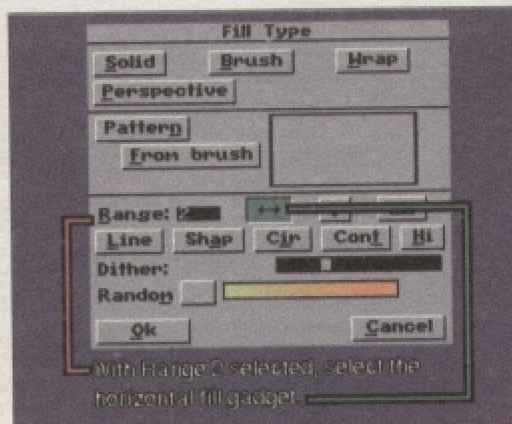
STEP 3

Once the colour spreads are defined, call up the Ranges requester. Here, using the start and end of each spread as the first and last colours in the range placement bar, create two ranges. Remember to change the range number after creating the first; let's make the range of greys (colour slots 18 to 33) number 1, and the gold (slots 64 to 79) range 2.

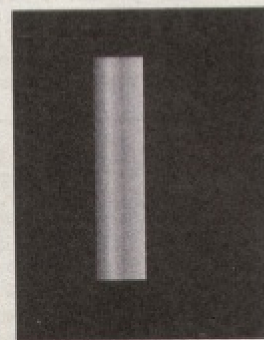


STEP 4

Now it's time to make a start on the actual image. First of all we're going to let *DPaint* draw a 3D-looking candle. Conveying a solid on screen is all a question of light and shade in this case. We'll be tackling perspective later, so trust me on this one. Call up the Fill requester (Right click the pointer in the Fill tool). Make sure Range 1 is selected, and click on the horizontal fill icon (horizontal arrows pointing East and West). This tells *DPaint* to use our range of colours across the screen. Play around with the Dither option until you get a nice grainy effect on the range of colours in the display bar. Close the requester by clicking on OK.



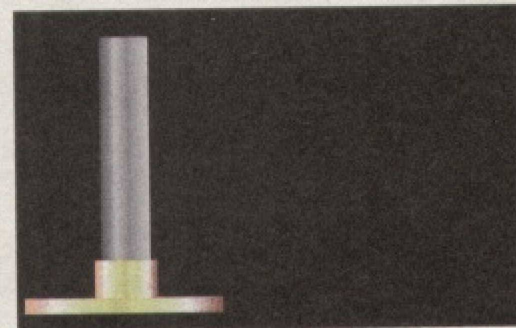
STEP 5



Click at the bottom-right of the Rectangle tool to activate filled rectangle mode. Now draw out a candle shape, and click the highlight cursor in the middle of the object. The shape now fills with the Range of greys we've already defined. Clever eh!

STEP 6

Creating the candle holder is identical, except you need to call up the Fill requester again and choose Range 2, which goes from yellow to gold. Draw a stubby rectangle for the holder, and a thin rectangle for the base. It's a 60 second job, because as you can see *DPaint*'s doing the donkey work.



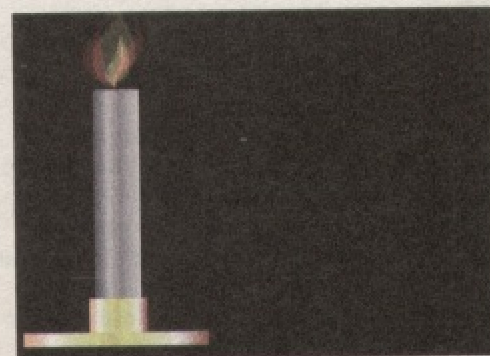
STEP 7

Next job is the wick and flames. The wick is simply a single pixel red brush stroke. For the flame effect I called up the Translucency requester (Effect/Translucency/Settings menu item) and set the figure to 61. The higher the figure, the more 'see-through' your colour.

Turn on Translucency from the same menu (or press the Alt key and, with it still pressed, hit the 't' key).

Now with yellow selected as the foreground colour, draw out a small flame shape over the wick. The translucency effect allows you to see through the colour.

Do the same thing with different shades of yellow and light red to build up a flame which appears to be flickering. Don't be afraid to overpaint flame colours already on screen, as this just adds to the effect.



STEP 8

To ensure the top edge of the candle looks realistic, just paint over the edge with Smooth selected from the Mode menu, using the small in-built brush. To get the running wax effect, you need to call up the Fill requester again, and activate Range 1 (the greys we used for the candle). The horizontal fill button should still be active from last time. Now with the filled freehand tool active (click in the lower right area of the Freehand tool to select), draw out a drool of wax on a spare part of the screen. When you've done that, it will fill with the range of greys.



STEP 9

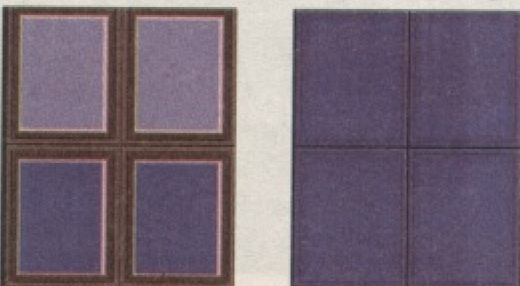
Cut out the wax dribble as a brush, and select Anti Alias/High from the Effect menu. This will smooth the edges beautifully and when you paint the dribble on the candle it will be melded into the image to give a realistic look. Position the dribble, stamp it onto the candle, and watch the anti-alias do its magic.



STEP 10

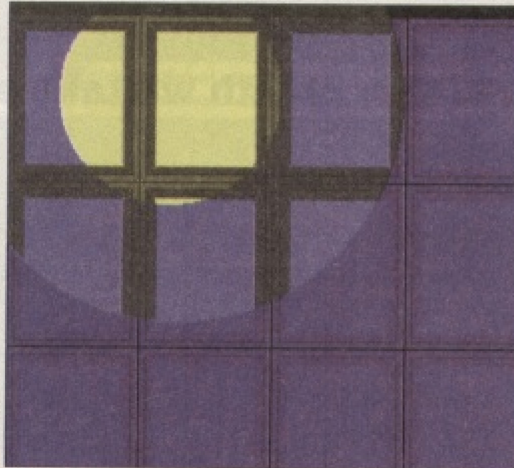
That's the candle done with. Now save your image in case disaster befalls... We'll now concentrate on the background. It can be anything you like. I chose a uniform, repetitive pattern, but this technique works on anything. Switch to the Spare page (keyboard press 'j); this gives you freedom to work on a large area, and at the same time preserves your original image.

Draw your background, then using the Effect/Process/Tint option (with Process turned ON) cover the entire backdrop with a darkish blue solid rectangle. To do this you must call up the Fill requester and select Colour as the Fill type. The image, no matter how many colours you used to create it, now takes on a gloomy blue look.



STEP 11

We need to illuminate a specific area surrounding the candle flame now. To do this, select yellow from the palette, and with Tint still active, draw out a circle to colour a portion of the background yellow. Turn off Process (Alt/P) and activate the Translucency effect to draw out a dimmer circle using white.



STEP 12

Turn off translucency (Alt/t toggles). Switching back to the candle screen (j) pick up the candle as a brush, and switch back to the spare screen. With black selected as the foreground colour outline the whole object by pressing the O key, then place the candle on the background, lining up the highlights with the actual flame.



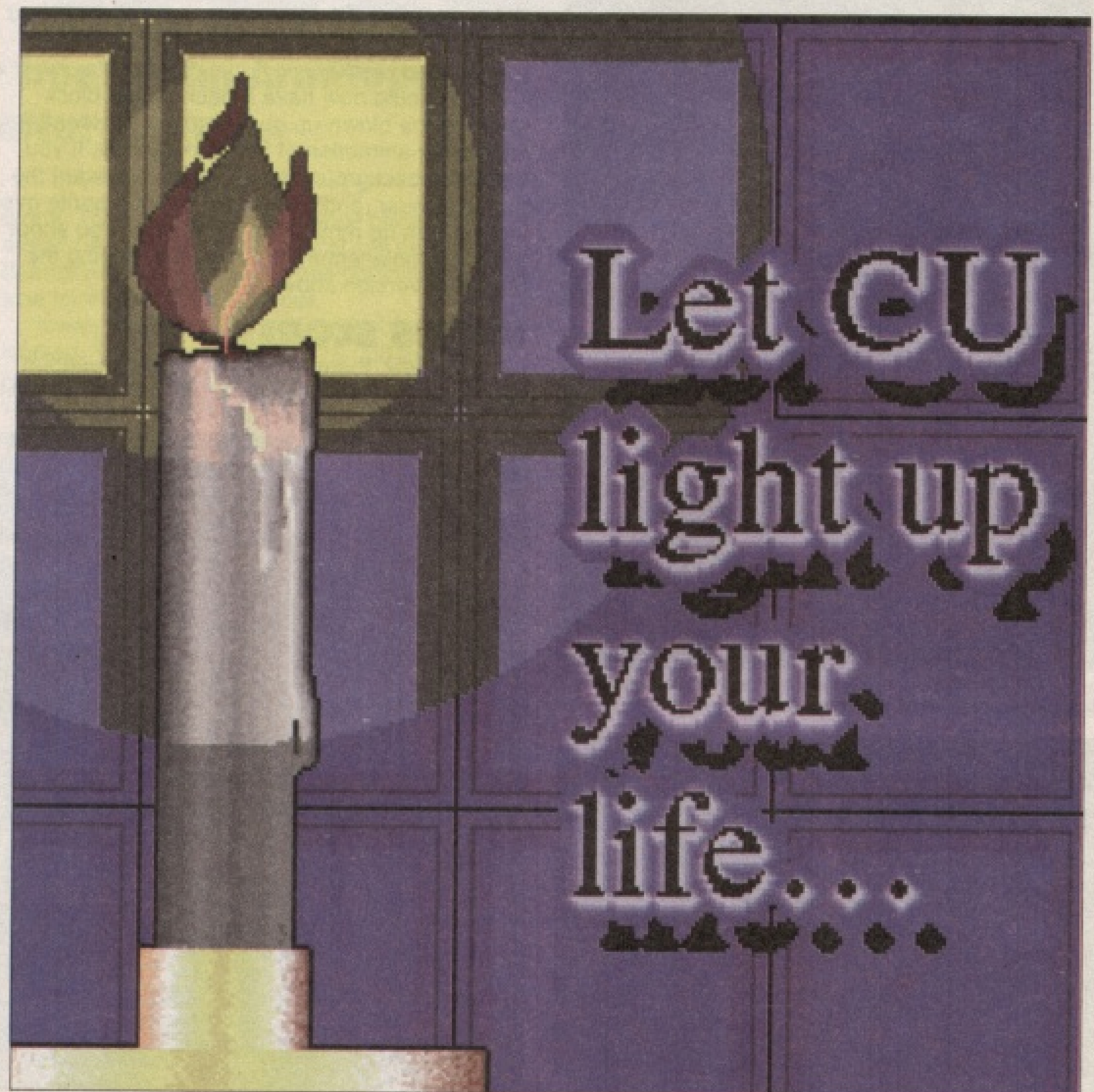
STEP 13

To add the perfecting details and to finish off the job you can darken portions of the candle and highlight others with yellow from the flame. For highlight work, select yellow with a Translucency of 80.

Then the next step is to darken the candle near the base by selecting dark grey with a Translucency of 37.

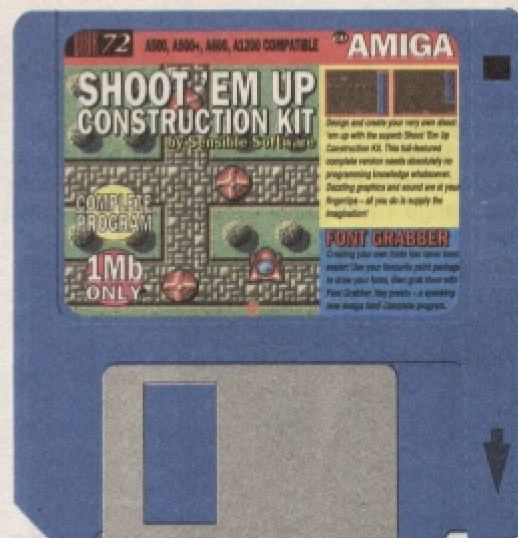
STEP 14

To complete the image you can add text. In this case the words were cut out as a brush, and Outlined (o) repeatedly with darkening blues before being pasted down.



SHOOT 'EM UP CONSTRUCTION KIT

We gave away the Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit with the January issue of CU AMIGA. This month we take a look at some of its finer points.



By now you should have got to grips with the basics of the *Shoot 'em Up Construction Kit* from the January issue of CU AMIGA. We covered the essentials of creating a game from scratch last issue, so this month we'll take a look at some tricks you can use to add a few twists to your games.

ANIMATED SCENERY

You might think that it's impossible to animate your backgrounds – after all, you can't animate the blocks that make up the scrolling levels. In fact, you can incorporate all kinds of animation into your backgrounds. The secret is to use sprites. Take a look at *Slap 'n' Tickle* for some examples of how it can work.

Let's say you want to put some gun emplacements on the background. First you need to design the graphics for the gun. Enter the sprite editor and draw out a sprite or a few animated frames for the gun. Now go into the Object Editor and define the sprites you've just drawn as an enemy. For added realism, you should give some thought to what the gun emplacement might look like after you've blasted it. As it's really an enemy, just like any alien in the game, once you've shot it, it will explode and disappear. This will expose the background graphics beneath it. We can exploit this by drawing out a demolished version of the gun emplacement in one of the background blocks.

You should now have a background block showing the blown-up gun emplacement, and a little sprite animation of the working gun. If you insert the background block where you want the gun to appear, and then insert the gun sprite over the top with no movement path, when you shoot the gun emplacement, it'll explode, leaving the blown-up version showing through.

CREATING A DATA DISK

If you had trouble creating your SEUCK data disk last month, here's exactly how it's done.

1. Load Workbench and format a blank disk, naming it "SEUCK Games disk " (minus the quotes).
2. Insert SEUCK disk two and double click the disk icon, followed by the Make Games Disk icon.
3. Insert your newly formatted disk when prompted.
4. When all the disk activity has finished, you'll end up with a third disk called SEUCK Games Disk, which you can use to create your own self-running standalone games.

BONUS SCORES

Unfortunately, there's no way of adding weapon upgrades, but you can still include bonus pick-ups for extra points. Here's how.

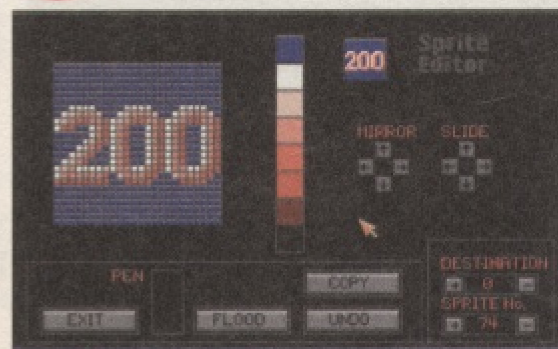
Define your bonus pick-up sprite in the sprite editor (maybe a spinning gold coin or a token for example). Go into the object editor and define this as an enemy. Now select Edit Enemy Bits from the Edit Objects Menu.

The important thing to change is the collision





1 It's amazing what you can do with a bit of imagination. Just SEUCK it and see.



2 Using sprites and enemies in cunning ways, you can make your own bonus pick-ups.



3 Who needs *Cannon Fodder* when you can write your own death and gore shoot 'em up.



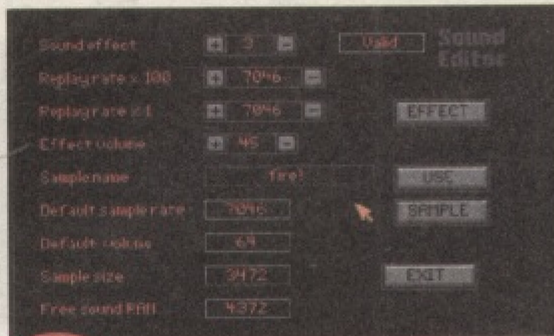
4 Hmmm...what do reckon, perhaps a bush here? And maybe that bridge would look nice over there...decisions, decisions...



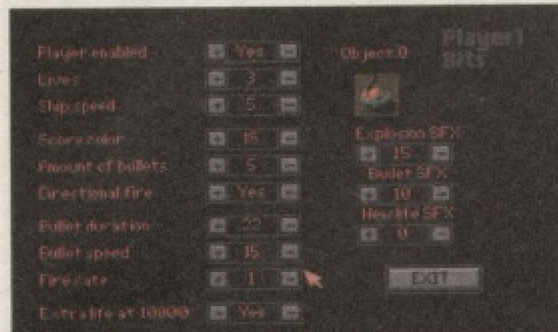
5 Here we see the patchwork quilt editor. Correction, this is actually the bank of blocks used to make up the backgrounds.



6 How about adding a lone duckling to this section of river for that pathetic touch?



8 Using different playback rates, you can generate a number of sound effects from a single sample.



7 Get your player bits out, and tweak 'em till you're happy.



9 ...and here it is in all its glory: CU AMIGA - The Shoot 'Em Up.

detection options. Normally you'd blow up if you touched an enemy, but you need to be able to touch this one to pick it up, so change the Enemy to ship-ship die option to NO, and the Enemy to ship-enemy die option to YES. You can then decide whether you want to be able to shoot the pick-ups for bonuses too, selected with the Enemy to bullet options.

To get things looking nice and slick, you should really replace the normal enemy explosion with a twinkling score indicator. For example, if you wanted to award 2000 points for this particular pick-up, you could design a nice shiny spinning 2000 sprite, and tag that to the pick-up enemy object as it explodes.

Now when you run, drive or fly into the pick-up, its explosion will display a nice twinkly 2,000 points logo.

SOUND EFFECTS

Okay then, it's cards on the table time. The file handling on *SEUCK* isn't the best. If you want to load your own sound effects into your game, you may well have had trouble with the awkward New IFF Sound Directory option.

You've probably noticed that it doesn't accept the usual colons and backslashes used to address files, directories and disks. It assumes you are only going to be using DF0: so the easiest way to load your own samples is to first put them on a blank disk in a directory called sound1. That way you can ignore the New IFF Sound Directory option altogether.

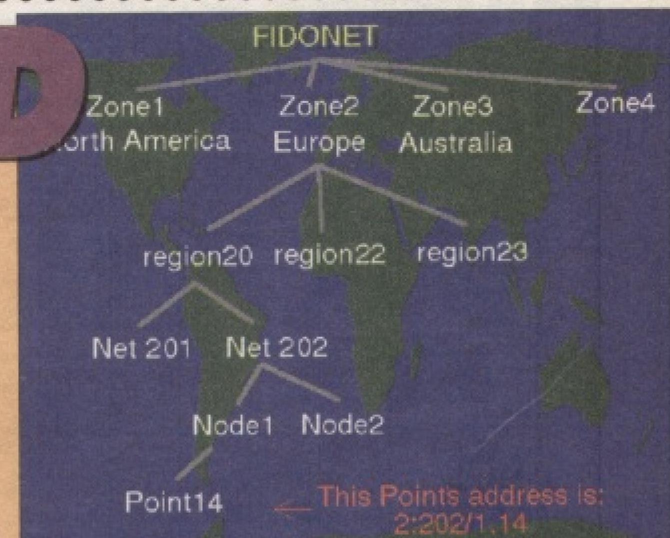
Remember that your sound effects must be IFF samples. *SEUCK* cannot accept samples in RAW format.

FURTHER ZAPPING

To get the best idea of what you can do with *SEUCK*, contact a few PD libraries and get hold of some other *SEUCK*-created games. You should be able to load these into the *SEUCK* editor to be scrutinised in detail. Happy zapping! CU

WIRED WORLD

Want to talk to the world for free? John Armitage looks at the huge global FidoNet system.



Each FidoNet address consists of a Zone, a Net, a Node andan optional Point. The address varies with the geographical positionof your nearest node. If you become a point, you will begiven a number that follows the node, as shown in the example above.

You have probably heard about FidoNet, but whether you actually know anything about it is another matter altogether. If you happen to have a modem, it's about time you knew what the fuss was about and if you still haven't treated yourself, perhaps this will convince you.

FidoNet was started in 1984 by a chap called Tom Jennings (who wanted a method for allowing private Bulletin Boards to share electronic mail at night). The idea was simple: since practically everyone has a BBS only a local call away, if the boards were connected anyone could mail anyone else for the cost of a local call.

It was a tremendous idea, and what's more it worked. There are now about 10,000 bulletin boards on the FidoNet distributed all over the world, and since each board can have hundreds of users... well, you get the idea – there are a lot of people on-line.

JARGON BUSTERS

- ADDRESS: A special number that specifies your location in the network, just like an ordinary postal address.
- BOSS: The Sysop of a local board, who agrees to make you a Point on his system.
- ECHOMAIL: Conferences on specialised topics. Not only computers (including our beloved Amiga) but music, films – anything! Remember the conferences are global, so get a wider picture of the world.
- FIDONET: A world-wide network of Bulletin Boards, all sharing electronic mail and files between each other. It is free to use FidoNet, the only cost is your local telephone call.
- NETMAIL: Every member of the Fidonet has a unique address, making it possible for any two members to exchange messages even half way across the world.
- NODELIST: The software that Bosses or Points use requires a copy of the Nodelist – a list of the details of every single BBS in the FidoNet system. It's several megabytes big!
- POINT: A dedicated user will become a Point on the Fidonet system, and enjoy many benefits such as off-line reading and writing of messages.

FIND YOUR FIDO

To make use of FidoNet, all you need to do is find a local BBS on the system and dial it up. Once on-line you can send electronic mail messages to any other user on the board, as long as you know their special address. When you send a message, the text is compressed and passed on to other boards until it eventually reaches its destination.

Due to the incredibly well-organised layout of the FidoNet, it hardly takes any time for mail to be delivered – certainly faster than Airmail. On the board you'll find conferences on specialised subjects such as the Amiga. Some magazines even have their own echomail sections.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

When you start to use FidoNet properly, you can register as a 'point'. A Point is a special dedicated Email address, and when your local BBS's sysop has granted you one you then have all sorts of privileges

For starters, Points can use special software which allows you to prepare your messages before you make the telephone call. The software will automatically compress your text, upload it and download any waiting messages it only requires a few very short calls a week, which can save you a bundle.

Points can also request files over the net, which makes it the fastest way to get PD software: you simply stick up a request and next time you log on the software is downloaded to you. CU

Thanks to Colin Turner, sysop of Heart of Gold (2:443/13) 0247 274919

NEXT MONTH

In the next instalment of Comms, John describes the software you'll need to set up a FidoNet point.

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G011 - AIR ACE 2 - A great World War 2 shoot em up.
G013 - THE REVENGE - Play ED-209 from Robocop in this violent shoot em up.
G015 - MEGABALL - A game that has received excellent reviews.
G016 - SIMPSONS - Televisions wacky family brought to life in this shoot em up construction kit game.
G020 - LAME ST-PORTS - A space invaders type game, the object being to defeat Atari.
G021 - MASTER OF THE TOWN - The aim of this game is to cause as much damage as possible.
G025 - DRAGONS CAVE - A dungeon master style puzzle game.
G026 - DOWN HILL CHALLENGE - Good ski simulater.
G028 - PIPELINE - Classic game but too fast on A1200/A4000 due to superior processor.
G039 - SMURFHUNT - Plenty of gun power in this shoot em up.
G040 - PARADOX - Funky puzzle game.
G043 - WIBBLE WORLD GIDDY - A superb platform game. This is one of the best public domain games ever.
G047 - SUPER PAKMAN - If you like Pak games, then get this!!! The best version to date.
G048 - NEIGHBOURS - (2 disks) An excellent graphic adventure, probably the best ever in PD.
G049 - FIGHTING WARRIORS - Budget version of Streetfighter 2 with good graphics.
G050 - BOMB JACKY - The spectrum classic with vastly improved graphics and sound.
G055 - TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE - Inspired by a true story.
G056 - 18 HOLE GOLF - The first ever public domain golf game. Great fun. (2 disks)
G057 - SPACE INVADERS 2 - A revised version of the classic game.
G059 - AMOS CRICKET - A good cricket simulater written in Amos.
G060 - TRON 2 - If you liked the original, then you can't miss this update. Faster and improved presentation.
G061 - ESCAPE - The aim of this excellent game is to run over tiles pushing specific ones down to open gates which allow you to reach the exit. Do it within a time limit to progress.
G062 - DR. MARIO - Similar to a NES game of similar name but better graphics.
G063 - ASSAULT - This average game involves you shooting all the characters that pop up in the windows.
G064 - DEATH BINGERS IN SPACE - A Xenon style shoot em up.
G065 - ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE - Good fun with lots of blood and guts.
G066 - STARIANS - Bizarre platform game.
G067 - SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE - A good game for up to four players with track editor etc.
G068 - PREMIER PICKS - Very unique football management game, very well presented.
G069 - BILLY BURGLAR - Dodge lights to escape from prison.
G070 - AMIGABOY - The n game Tetris is widely regarded at its best on the Gameboy. It has now been perfectly converted, with exact visual representation.
G071 - ACT OF WAR - A game of similar style to risk.
G072 - ADAMS FAMILY QUIZ - How much do you know?
G073 - PARACHUTE JOUST - Guide the skydiver to the ground.
G074 - CARD SHARP - Various card games.
G075 - JEWL - A brilliant game.
G076 - TOP SECRET - Sorry, can't tell you!!!
G077 - JELLY QUEST - This game by David McGuire was described by Amiga Power quote "It's a superior brand of PD puzzle game, and its looks can only be described as - dead lush!" It went on to receive a 4 out of 5 star rating.
G078 - VENUS INVADERS - Excellent new version of space invaders.
G079 - THE RIGHT WAY - A great lemmings clone.
G080 - SUPER PRIX - A birds-eye-view racing game.
G081 - PATIENCE - The best public domain version of this card game.

UTILITIES

U001 - THE ULTIMATE BACKUP DISK - All the very best public domain copiers including DCopy, Tetracopy and XCopy.
U013 - BUSINESS CARD MAKER - A utility that can give professional results for use with any printer.
U021 - SYSTEM X - A telephone directory on disk. It even dials the number!!!
U136 - 600 BUSINESS LETTERS - Over 600 letters of basic format ready for quick and simple modification in any word processor.
U139 - PRINTER DRIVERS DISK - An excellent selection of drivers to get your printer working perfectly.
U140 - LABEL MAKER - Excellent utility allowing you to make your own disk labels. We have added several fonts to give you more design options.
U153 - MULTIPLAYER - Can play virtually any type of music module.
U167 - WINDOWBENCH - A replacement for Workbench V1.3 in the style of Microsoft Windows.
U168 - GAME TAMER V2.2 - Loads of cheats (over 250) for use in many top games.
U176 - UNDERSTANDING AMOS - A very useful learning aid.
U178 - AGRAPH - Create all kinds of pie charts, bar charts and line graphs.
U179 - CLI TUTOR - Loads of hints and tips.
U180 - DISK OPTIMISER - Speeds up loading by up to 15 times.
U181 - FORMS UNLIMITED - Create your own invoices and other forms with this neat utility.
U183 - MAGNUM - Create your own disk based magazine.
U184 - EDWORD - Excellent text editor.
U185 - POOLS PREDICTION - If you need more help (or money) try this disk.
U186 - VMORPH V2.0 - Excellent utility that allows you to create morph/warp animation. Requires 1MB.
U187 - THE MENU DISK - If you are interested in creating your own compilations etc. then get this disk. Its perfect for added presentation.
U188 - CLUB LEAGUE - A utility that allows you to edit and keep track of your teams division and league status.
U189 - SCREEN BLANKERS - A disk packed with screen blankers.
U190 - THE LITTLE OFFICE - One of the best small business programs available at the moment. Very popular.
U191 - VOICE CLI V5.5 - This utility allows you to control CLI with speech.
U192 - ACCOUNT MASTER - Written in Amos this is a very popular business utility of excellent quality.
U193 - SOFTWARE LISTER - This program is designed to keep track of your software collection.
U194 - DISKPRINT V3.5 - An integrated database and disk label printing utility.
U195 - RACE V1.6 - A disk that will work out the chance of a horse winning a race.
U196 - DRAW MAP V4.1 - There are two versions, this is the 1MB version. It allows you to create 2D and 3D maps. Quote U296 for 2MB version, which comes on 2 disks.
U197 - FOOTBALL LEAGUE EDITOR V1.1 - As soon as the results come in, you can monitor your teams latest position.
U198 - GOLF SCORES V1.8 - It can record the results of every round you play, store them and give an overall electronic score.
U199 - ANTI FLICKER - An aid to stop the flicker in Hi-Res mode during some programs operations.
U200 - AMICASH BANKIN - If you have a small business, this program is the best of its nature and highly recommended.
U201 - PUNT PROGRAM - Another prediction aid for the horses.
U202 - MONEY MANAGEMENT - Home accounts package capable of handling up to 12 different accounts.
U203 - EASY CALC V1.0 - This spreadsheet is designed to be both very user friendly and fast. It has an excellent built in help system.
U204 - KEYBOARD TRAINER V1.1 - Best public domain typing tutor available at present.
U205 - M-CAD - Computer aided design program.
U206 - NO ERRORS - Hides the hard errors on disks making all your corrupt disks usable once again.
U208 - 203 UTILITIES - The most utilities ever available on a single disk.

UTILITIES

U209 - UNDELETE - This utility allows you to get back stuff that was accidently deleted from disk.
U210 - JOYSTICK TESTER - A brilliant joystick testing program.
U211 - RED SECTOR DEMO MAKER - A 2 meg version of the most popular utility ever!!! Create stunning demos/megademos/intros. The special thing is that it has been modified to work with the A500+ and even better the A1200. (2 drives rec. A1200)
U212 - AIBB V5 - A good diagnostic program.
U213 - SYS INFO V3.11 - A disk that will let you know the technical status of your machine.
U214 - ENGINEERS KIT - A diagnostic disk, specially suited for engineers etc.
U215 - DISK REPAIRERS - Will allow you to try and make all your unusable disks work again.
U216 - AMIGA DIAGNOSTICS - Solve thousands of amiga problems with this diagnostics disk.
U217 - LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT - Write your own will.
U218 - MUSIC BASE UTILITY - Store your record/video collection.
U219 - ERROR INFO - Gives you a list of all amiga error codes and their meanings.
U220 - PC TASK V2.02 - IBM PC emulater it allows you to run the majority of PC software with no additional hardware. Now supports VGA, EGA, CGA and MDA. (DV)
U222 - REPAIR-IT 3 - Contains a selection of disk and hard drive repairing utilities. Excellent for saving that vital file.
U224 - SPECTRUM EMULATER - This is the best and latest version of the most popular emulater for the amiga. There are 68020/030 versions for new AGA amigas.(2 disks)
U225 - STOCK ANALYST - This is a technical analysis and securities tracking program which calculates when to buy and sell shares.
U226 - ASTRONOMY V2.0 - A menu driven astronomy program that calculates information about the Sun, Moon and planets. Help disk.
U227 - MING SHU CHINESE ASTROLOGY - Will create horoscopes in seconds. The complete aid.
U228 - COLOURED ICONS - Transfer your disks into colourful, well presented works of art with this database.
U229 - KIDS PAINT - An art package simplified for the younger amiga owners.
U230 - STAR VIEW - This program is designed to show graphically the positions of the stars and planets from any part of the earth.
U231 - AQUARIUM - Turns your screen into an eye catching fish tank.
U232 - OCTAMED V2 - Latest version of the famous music package.
U233 - NUMPAD FOR A600 - A program that makes the A600 think its got a numeric keypad.
U234 - ADDRESS PRINT V3.1 - Very useful if you make regular postal correspondence.
U235 - IFF BOOT - Displays a picture whilst your hard disk boots up.
U237 - PAY ADVICE ANALYSER - A very useful program for keeping track of pay, tax and national insurance.
U238 - CANNON PRINT STUDIO - Got a Cannon printer? This disk is essential for brilliant results.
U239 - FANCY PRINTING DISK - Contains Banner, Graph Paper V1.2 and Disk Print V3.5
U240 - BBASEIII - An easy to use versatile, yet fully featured database. Greatly enhanced successor to bBaseII.
U241 - ADM V1.01 - Flexable address database with loads of great features.
U242 - LITTLE TRAVELLER V1.1 - This utility shows a world map and allows you to select any country for travel information. It then zooms in giving a close-up map with more information.
U243 - BANNER MAKER - Create spectacular printed banners.
U265 - PROTECTION - Keep unwanted users from playing with your amiga.
U266 - PARBENCH - Link up two Amiga's and communicate with each other.
U283 - TEXTENGINE V4.1 - Sent direct from author Nicholas Harvey, this excellent program has all known bugs fixed. Has 36,000 word spell checker.

EDUCATION

E001 - TOTAL CONCEPTS DINOSAURS - A book on disk appropriate for sensational Jurassic Park movie. Get it!!!
E002 - SCIENCE - Excellent learning aid to the difficult subject. (4 disks)
E003 - FRACTIONS AND SILHOUETTES - Good maths utility.
E004 - WORLD WAR 2 - Good history aid.
E006 - WORLD GEOGRAPHY - Very useful utility.
E007 - KIDS DISK 1 - Excellent reading utility.
E008 - LEARN AND PLAY 1 - For younger amiga users, very popular.
E009 - LEARN AND PLAY 2 - See above, usually ordered as a 2 disk set.
E010 - GCSE MATHS - Good, written by a teacher of the subject.
E011 - LANGUAGE TUTOR - French, Spanish, German and Italian.
E012 - AMIGAWORLD - This piece of educational software contains details on every country.

DEMOS

D004 - ARSEWIPE - Hilarious toilet role commercial.
D007 - FILLET THE FISH - Cartoon animation.
D019 - SIMPSONS SLIDESHOW - Pictures of televisions wacky family.
D023 - PUGGS IN SPACE - Another cartoon animation from the same person who brought you Fillet the Fish.
D025 - SAM FOX - Slideshow.
D035 - RUDE NOISES - Hilarious samples.
D036 - FAST CARS - Pictures of the worlds most exotic cars.
D074 - MADONNA LIKE A VIRGIN - Music put to naked slideshow of Madonna
D091 - SAFE SEX DEMO - Hilarious mixed samples.
D114 - NEIGHBOURS SLIDESHOW - Very old but still amusing pictures of the cast with drawn on special effects.
D121 - GIRLS ON FILM - Digitised animation.
D129 - SHOWERING GIRLS - Colour digitised slideshow.
D138 - WAR SIMULATER - Samples that could get you a day off school or work. Sounds of sickness and war. Try it down the phone!!!
D198 - BASIC INSTINCT - Digitised pictures from the film.
D199 - STRIP SLOT MACHINE

VIDEO ART

U026 - TV GRAFFIX - Loads of backdrops etc. for use with genlock. Also fonts for Dpaint. (2 disks)
U169 - HARLEQUIN VIDEO ART 1 - Excellent collection of backdrops of superb quality for use with genlock.
U171 - HARLEQUIN FONTS 1 - Loads of excellent Hi-Res fonts.
U172 - HARLEQUIN FONTS 2 - More of the above.

VIRUS KILLER

V001 - SUPERKILLERS - Highly recommended as it could save you ££'s. Essential for hard disk owners. With no virus protection you are putting your entire software collection at risk. Regular updates to keep in touch with all virus activity. Separate versions for AGA machines.
All our disks are virus free.

MUSIC

MD01 - MUSIC MODULES - A massive 10 disk collection of good quality music modules. All of soundtracker file type for use with RSI Demo maker, Noiseplayer and many other applications.

AGA SECTION

A019 TO A023 - WEIRD SCIENCE - Excellent quality pictures. (5 disks - available separately)
A024 - FIT CHICKS - A collection of girly pictures for the A1200 only. (2 disks)
A025 - FREAKS BODY SHOP - A small selection of girly pictures.
A030 - FERRARI PICTURES - Pictures of a new model from the worlds most exotic car maker. Good 256 colour pictures.
A036 - NIGHTBREAD - Many pictures drawn in 256 colours. (2 disks)
G042 - AGA TETRIS - Controlled with the cursor keys, this excellent conversion of probably the most addictive game ever is now available with 256 colour graphics.
G082 - AGA CHESS - An excellent game but you will need 4mb of ram to get it to work!!!
U001 - ULTIMATE BACKUP DISK - This compilation includes DCopy V3.0 which is probably the only copier that works successfully on the A1200/A4000.
U123 - WORKBENCH HACKS - Many useless special effects for workbench V3.0
U118 - MORE WORKBENCH HACKS - Guess what?
U255 - WB V3.0 INSTALL - If you need to install your hard disk then you need this.
U256 - A1200 DEGRADERS - An essential purchase for AGA owners. Includes Fake Fast Mem, The Degrader, Diskstart, Kill AGA V2 and Helpful hints.
U257 - VIEWTEK V1.03 - An essential purchase allowing you to display AGA graphics.
U258 - HDMEM - This utility allows your AGA machine to use your hard disk as virtual memory. If you've got a 80mb hard disk then you can have 80mb ram. Requires FMU, MMU etc.
U272 - WORKBENCH V3.0 SCREENS - Improve the appearence of workbench with these excellent backdrops.
D181 - TEAM HOI PLANNER GROOVE - This was the worlds first ever AGA megademo.
D195 - PANTARHEI - A new AGA megademo. With amazing sound, graphics and colours.
D197 - TEAM HOI 2 - Sequel to the first ever megademo.

ABOVE DISKS WORK WITH A1200/A4000 ONLY.

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OVER 135 NOW AVAILABLE.

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FONTS AVAILABLE IN ADOBE TYPE 1 TESTED ON FINAL COPY IIB + PAGESTREAM V2.1 AND SCALABLE FORMATS TESTED ON PROFESSIONAL PAGE V3.0 + PAGESETTER V3.0.

FD01	FD02	FD03	FD04	FD05	FD06
FD07	FD08	FD09	FD10	FD11	FD12
FD13	FD14	FD15	FD16	FD17	FD18
FD19	FD20	FD21	FD22	FD23	FD24
		FD25	FD26		

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BILLBOARD Chicargo Arctic2
AvantGarde Cartoon
Architect CaslonOpenface

A SMALL SELECTION OF FONTS FROM SETS 1 TO 4

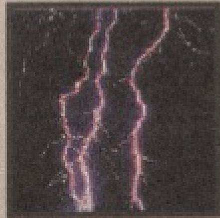
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BACK TO BASIC WITH BLITZ BASIC 2

PART 3



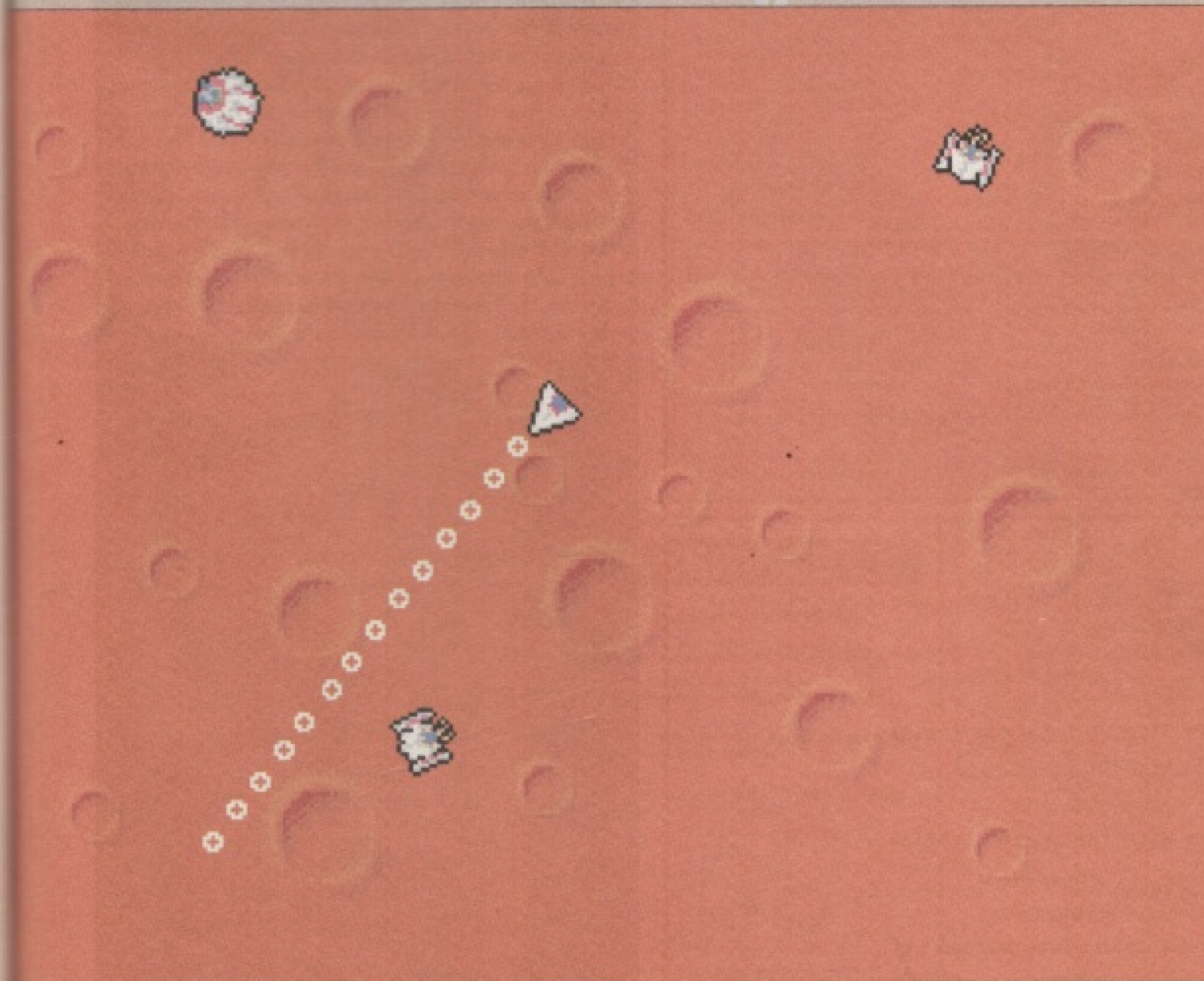
BLITZ BASIC

If you want your *Blitz Basic* games to run at break-neck speeds, you need to harness the power of dual playfield displays. Jason Holborn is the man with the code...

If there's one aspect of *Blitz Basic* that has done more to tempt AMOS, it has to be the extra spurt of speed that the *Blitz* code offers over its rival. Even the simplest of programs run much faster than their AMOS counterparts and for larger projects such as games, *Blitz*'s impressive turn of speed can transform a snail-like AMOS game into a slick and lightening fast *Blitz* wonder. The speed advantage that *Blitz* offers is more than adequately demonstrated by the range of public domain *Blitz Basic* games that Acid cunningly distributed prior to the UK launch of the language itself. Comparing something like the *Blitz* games *BuzzBar* or *Defender* to an equivalent AMOS game is like comparing the original *Elite* on the Commodore 64 to David Braben's latest masterpiece, *Frontier*, running on an accelerated Amiga!

Most of the *Blitz Basic* demonstration games distributed by Acid use a very cunning trick that is misleading when you compare games written in these two rival languages. Take a game like *BuzzBar*, for example (it's bundled free of charge with all copies of *Blitz Basic 2*!) – offering high speed scrolling and ultra-fast blitter objects whizzing around the screen at the sort of speeds that would make even Nigel Mansell sweat. Programming a game of this type in AMOS would be virtually impossible. The reason? Simple – dual playfield displays. Dual playfield is a special display mode offered by the Amiga's display hardware that allows you to overlay one screen (or, to use the correct terminology, one 'playfield') on top of another. What's more, the background colour from the foreground playfield is made transparent allowing any graphics that are displayed on the background playfield to show through the gaps in the foreground playfield.

Dual playfield mode is used to great effect in *BuzzBar*. The game's screen is split between the two playfields, allowing the scrolling backdrop and the sprites that whiz over it to be kept completely separate. The scrolling backdrop is nothing more than an enormous bitmap that is scrolled according to the direction of movement controlled by the player's joystick. The game's sprites, on the other hand, are drawn into the foreground playfield which isn't scrolled at all. There's a very good reason why dual playfield mode is used in *BuzzBar* – although Acid probably wouldn't admit it – *Blitz Basic* isn't that fast at drawing blitter objects. In fact, AMOS is possibly faster when drawing blobs onto a bitmap that has to be restored each time the blob is moved. *Blitz* is fast, however, at drawing blobs when it doesn't have to worry about restoring the background graphics. Hence the reason why dual playfield mode is used in *BuzzBar*!



Acid's *BuzzBar* game uses dual playfield mode to give the fastest possible screen updating.

DUAL IDENTITY

However, Dual playfield displays have a number of major limitations. One is the number of colours that can be used – because you're combining two screens into one, the Amiga's display hardware only allows a maximum of eight colours to be displayed on each in low resolution mode (this drops to just four when using medium and high resolution dual playfield displays!). The AGA chip set does increase this to a maximum of sixteen colours per 'playfield' but until Acid get around to releasing a fully AGA compatible version of *Blitz*, I'm afraid we're stuck with the old ECS limitations. The second problem is that both screens have to be the same resolution – you can't have a low resolution screen overlaid on top of a medium resolution screen.

Before AMOS owners throw up their hands in horror and write in complaining that I haven't done AMOS justice, it has to be said that AMOS also supports dual playfield displays but there's one big problem with AMOS' implementation of this powerful display mode – it doesn't work. Sure, AMOS will open a dual playfield screen (sometimes!) but try scrolling either playfield horizontally and you'll get some rather unpredictable results (or maybe even a complete system crash!). Francois Lionet still hasn't fixed this problem – let's just hope the AGA version of AMOS sorts it out!

Creating a dual playfield display in *Blitz Basic* is very simple indeed, especially if you compare it to either assembler language or even AMOS. In order to get *Blitz* to create a dual playfield display, you need to start by creating two bitmaps – one for the foreground and another for the background 'playfield'. Don't forget that the dual playfield mode does limit how many colours each playfield can handle – eight is the maximum in low resolution mode and there's just four on offer when you create a medium resolution display. If you're creating a dual playfield display, chances are that you'll want to scroll the background playfield, so make sure that it is larger than the slice that will be used to display it. You don't have to make both playfields the same size either. If you don't want to scroll the foreground screen, for example, you can simply define its bitmap as the same size as the slice. This not only saves memory, but is a lot less confusing.

Once you've defined your two bitmaps, you need to initialise the Slice that will hold the dual playfield display using the same Slice command that we've been using over the past two months. There are a number of differences between the format of the Slice command used to display a normal screen and a dual playfield display, however. The first major difference is in the Flags parameter. Unless you specify otherwise, *Blitz* will automatically assume that the screen that you're defining is not dual playfield, so you need to set the dual playfield Flag. This is easy enough – you simply add two to the Flag value. In the case of a standard low resolution display, this would give

»

» you a Flag value of '$fffa' (as opposed to '$fff8' for a standard low resolution display). For a medium resolution screen, the Flag value would be '$fffb'.

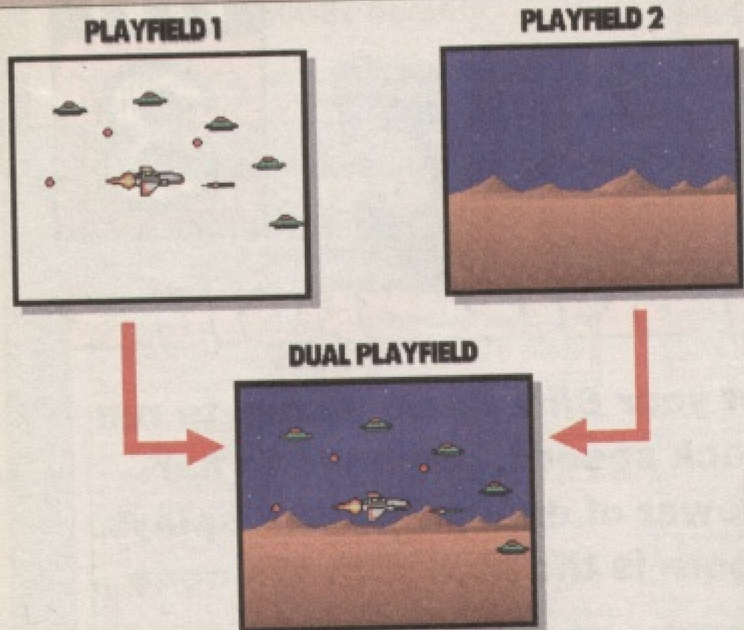
DUAL PURPOSE

There is a further change that needs to be made to the format of the Slice command. As you may remember from our first *Blitz Basic* column, the Slice command fed two width values (the last two parameters). In the case of a standard non-dual playfield display, these two parameters would contain the same value – the width of the bitmap that the slice is to display. In the case of a dual playfield slice, however, these two parameters hold the horizontal width of the foreground and background bitmaps. The width of the foreground bitmap must be entered first followed by the width of the background bitmap. If you get these values wrong, expect some very weird effects!

Anyway, now we have initialised our two bitmaps and our dual playfield slice, all that remains is to turn everything on by displaying the two bitmaps in the slice using the Show command. Once again, however, there's a slight difference between the Show command used by a standard display and the Show command used by dual playfield displays. Because you're working with two separate screens, each screen must be displayed using a separate command. *Blitz* gives us two commands to handle this task – 'ShowF' and 'ShowB'. Not surprisingly, 'ShowF' displays the foreground bitmap and 'ShowB' shows the background bitmap. Note that the bitmaps you use must correspond with the bitmaps you used to specify the two width values when you defined your slice.

Just like a normal bitmap, *Blitz* allows you to scroll either of your playfields using the same 'X' and 'Y' extensions to the 'ShowB' and 'ShowF' commands that we used last month to scroll a bitmap using the standard 'Show' command. Be warned, however, the Amiga's hardware doesn't like scrolling both playfields at the same time. Say, for example, you tried to scroll the foreground left and the background right – Although it would work, the foreground bitmap would appear to jump horribly. Anyway, it's best to use dual playfield mode to display bobs on a scrolling backdrop without having to worry about restoring the background graphics.

That's enough of the theory, let's get stuck into some code. So, without further ado, boot up your copy of *Blitz Basic 2* and enter the following lines of code. The demonstration listing below simply creates a dual playfield display, draws lots of colourful circles into both playfields and then smoothly scrolls the background playfield horizontally. CU



Dual Playfield mode uses two separate bitmaps that are combined together. The background colour from the foreground playfield is made transparent allowing the background graphics to show through.

```
; *** Dual Playfield Demonstration
; *** By Jason Holborn

; *** Switch to Blitz mode...
BLITZ

; *** Init playfield 1...
BitMap 0,640,256,3
For a=0 To 200
    x=Rnd(640)
    y=Rnd(256)
    r=Rnd(10)+10
    c=Rnd(7)+1

    ; *** Draw random circles...
    Circlef x,y,r,c
Next a

; *** Init playfield 2...
BitMap 1,320,256,3
For a=0 To 200
    x=Rnd(320)
    y=Rnd(256)
    r=Rnd(5)+10
    c=Rnd(7)+1

    ; *** Draw more circles...
    Circlef x,y,r,c
Next a

; *** Initialise slice...
Slice 0,44,320,256,$fffa,6,8,16,320,640

; *** Init scroll pointer...
planex=0

Repeat

    ; *** Increase scroll pointer...
    planex=planex+2
    ; *** Reset pointer if greater than 320...
    If planex>320 Then planex=0

    ; *** Display both playfields...
    ShowF 1,0,0,0
    ShowB 0,planex,0,0

    ; *** Wait for vertical blank...
    VWait
Until Joyb(0)>0

; *** Press left mouse button to quit...
```

NEXT MONTH

Well, we hope you enjoyed this month's journey into *Blitz Basic*. Next month, we'll be starting to look at how you can create your own shapes/sprites in games and how they are used.



Blitz's 'ColSplit' command allows you to create the illusion of far more colours that the current slice is actually capable of displaying.

OVER THE RAINBOW

If you've migrated to *Blitz Basic* from AMOS, then you've probably missed the wonderfully colourful effects that you can create in AMOS using the 'Rainbow' command. As you may well remember, the 'Rainbow' command allowed you to create what are known as 'copper' colour effects that can increase the number of apparent colours on a single screen immeasurably. Well, *Blitz* offers this facility too in the form of the 'ColSplit' command.

Before we go any further, however, it's worth taking time out to discuss exactly how these rainbow effects are generated. Built into the Amiga's powerful 'Denise' custom chip (or 'Lisa' if you own an AGA-based Amiga) is a powerful slither of silicon that is effectively a processor in its own right. This 'copper' chip is responsible for handling colour palettes and the synchronisation of overlapping screens. It's this powerful copper chip that makes it possible for the Amiga to display several screens simultaneously, each with its own colour palette and resolution. The copper works by allowing programmers to change certain hardware registers (a screen's colour palette, for example) on a specified scan line. By creating what the techies call a 'copper list', all manner of weird and wonderful screen effects are possible.

The 'ColSplit' command allows you to alter the RGB value of a colour within a slice on a specified scan line. Once the command has been called and the colour has been changed, the slice's copper list which is created automatically for you by Blitz is modified to retain the colour change. As a result, the 'ColSplit' command only needs to be called once for the colour change to remain. It needs four parameters – the number of the colour that you'd like the command to effect, the new red, green and blue setting for that colour and finally the number of the scanline that you'd like the change to take place on. Give this demonstration program a whirl.

```
; *** Copper colours demonstration
; *** By Jason Holborn

BLITZ

; Rem *** A 1 bitplane screen!
BitMap 0,320,256,1

Slice 0,42,320,256,$fff8,1,8,2,320,320
Show 0

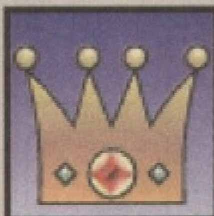
pos=0
For a=0 To 15
    ColSplit 0,a,0,0,pos
    pos=pos+16
Next a
ColSplit 0,0,0,0,256

MouseWait
End
```

INSIDE AREXX

PART 3

All programs have to make decisions and *ARexx* scripts are no exception. Dave Smithson shows you how to add a little intelligence to your *ARexx* scripts.



Welcome back to Inside *ARexx*, our regular column dedicated entirely to the *ARexx* programming language. Over the past two months we've covered quite a bit of ground, we've discussed how *ARexx* can be used as a programming language in its own right, to write scripts to control external applications and as a 'macro' language for internal control of an application. Last month, we even managed to write our first *ARexx* script. Sure, it wasn't very exciting but as a demonstration of how to enter an *ARexx* listing and then execute it from the Shell, it served its purpose beautifully.

This month, we take our look at *ARexx* one step further by introducing a couple of decision making and flow control constructs that you'll find yourself using a great deal in the future.

The ability to make decisions based around a set of user-definable rules – if the value of a variable is less than one then do this otherwise do that, for example.

Not surprisingly, *ARexx* supports decision making constructs too thanks to the good old 'IF...Then...Else' construct. Anyone who has even the slightest knowledge of Basic will recognise this construct immediately – yes, *ARexx*'s decision making construct is virtually identical to the equivalent construct in Basic.

Just like in Basic, *ARexx*'s 'IF' statement is capable of executing one of several embedded blocks of code depending upon the result of a decision. Say, for example, you wanted to test the value of a variable against a constant. If the variable was equal to that constant, then the first block of code is executed otherwise a second block of code is executed instead.

In *ARexx* terms, all you'd need is the following code. Before you get too excited and start typing it into your favourite text however, it should be stressed that the following code is what is known as 'skeleton' code – that is, it won't run without the addition of further code.

Don't worry – I'll give you a further demonstration listing later that you can type in and experiment with. Anyway, check out this skeleton code first of all:

```
If NUMBER = 3 Then
    Say "It's equal to 3!"
Else Do
    Say "It's not equal to 3!"
End
```

As you can see, the format of the construct is pretty straightforward and follows the same guidelines as Basic almost to the letter.

There a couple of minor difference, however, that you should be aware of. If you managed to spot them, then give yourself a pat on the back. Yes, it's that little keyword 'Do' that follows the 'Else' command and the 'End' keyword. Both of these are very important and, just to make life a little bit more difficult, the 'Do' keyword doesn't always appear in the same place.

The purpose of the 'Do' keyword is to mark the last part of the 'If' construct. In the case of our demonstration listing, there are two parts to the construct – the section of code that is executed if the variable is equal to three and the section of code that is executed if the variable contains any other value.

It is possible, however, to create what the techies would call 'embedded' decisions which are effectively decision constructs that are carried out according to the result of another construct. Say, for example, you wanted to test a variable more than once – if a variable is less than 4 but greater than 1 then do this otherwise if the variable is greater than 10 then do that.

Sounds complicated I know, but its very easy to implement in *ARexx*. Give this demonstration listing a go.

```
/*
Embedded decision making demo
By Dave Smithson
*/

Say 'Enter a number '
Pull NUMBER

If NUMBER4 Then
If NUMBER>1 Then
Say 'It's either 2 or 3!'
Else
Say 'It's either 1 or 0!'
Else
If NUMBER>9 Then
Say 'It's 10 or more!"
Else Do
Say 'It's less than 10!'
End
Exit
```

Looking through the listing, you'll notice that there's only one 'Do' and 'End' statement in the entire construct despite the fact that the construct effectively contains three separate 'IF... Then...Else' constructs. If you examine the code closely, you'll notice that the 'Do' keyword is attached to the last decision in the entire construct.

As I said earlier, the 'Do' statement needs to be appended to the last decision in the construct just so that *ARexx* knows that there aren't further conditions to follow. Finally, the entire construct is closed using the 'End' statement.

If you were to write this code in *Basic*, you'd close each of the three decision making constructs using an 'EndIf' statement for each – *ARexx* doesn't need this, however, as it is intelligent enough to know which conditions belong to which construct.

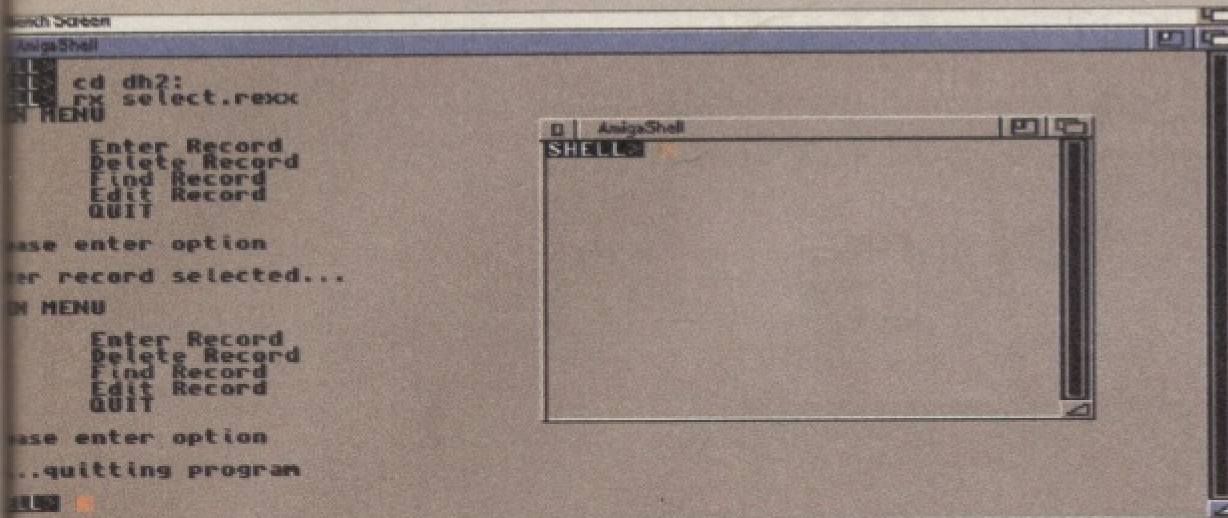
Because a simple 'If...Else' construct is effectively a boolean operation – do this or do that, giving you just two possible courses of action, *ARexx* knows that the second 'Else' statement can't belong to the second construct because its conditions already cover every possible course of action. This all seems very confusing I know, but

All programs have to make decisions and *ARexx* scripts are no exception. Thanks to *ARexx*'s 'If...Then' construct, you can add a little intelligence to your *ARexx* scripts.

```
AmigaShell
SHELL>
SHELL> Type RAM:If.Rexx
/*
        Embedded Decision Making demo
        By Jason Holborn
*/

Say "Enter a number "
Pull NUMBER

If NUMBER<4 Then
        If NUMBER>1 Then
                Say "It's either 2 or 3!"
        Else
                Say "It's either 1 or 0!"
Else
        If NUMBER>9 Then
                Say "It's 10 or more!"
        Else Do
                Say "It's less than 10!"
End
Exit
SHELL>
SHELL> RX RAM:If.Rexx
Enter a number
6
It's less than 10!
SHELL>
SHELL>
```



ARexx's brilliant 'SELECT...WHEN' construct comes in particularly handy when you want your script to perform a selection of different operations based upon the value of several variables.

it'll soon become crystal clear after a little experimentation, trust me.

OPEN AND SHUT CASE

A far better way of handling multiple actions is to make use of *ARexx*'s 'Select...When' construct, a derivative of Basic's 'Case' command that is sadly neglected in most modern programming languages these days.

As any professional programmer will tell you, the 'Select...When' construct comes in very handy when you need to perform a whole series of decisions on the same variable.

Say, for example, you had to write a menu for an *ARexx* database that allowed the user to select an operation by entering a number. If the user selected 1, then they would be allowed to enter a record, if the user selected 2, then they would delete a record from the database and so on. If you were to implement a menu program using an 'IF...THEN' construct, your code would start to get very complicated indeed.

With a 'Select...When' construct, however, you could very easily implement your menu with very little code. The construct starts with a single 'Select' command that opens up the construct. Each decision that you'd like to make can then be entered with a simple 'When' command. If all your 'When' decisions failed to trap every conceivable result, an additional 'Otherwise' command can be added that is performed if all else fails.

It's worth noting, however, that the 'Otherwise' command is not optional – even if you don't want to use it, the command must be added otherwise *ARexx* will display an error.

Finally, the construct is closed with the same 'End' command that we used with our 'If...Then' constructs. Time for a demonstration, methinks – try this listing for size.

```
/*
Select...When demonstration
By Dave Smithson
*/

CR = '0a'x

Do Until OPTION=5

Say "MAIN MENU" CR
Say "1. Enter Record"
Say "2. Delete Record"
Say "3. Find Record"
Say "4. Edit Record"
Say "5. QUIT" CR

Say "Please enter option"
Pull OPTION

Select
When OPTION=1 Then
Say "Enter record selected..." CR
When OPTION=2 Then
Say "Delete record selected..." CR
When OPTION=3 Then
Say "Find record selected..." CR
When OPTION=4 Then
Say "Edit record selected... "CR
When OPTION=5 Then
Say "Ok...quitting program" CR
Otherwise
Say "What?!!!"
End
End
```

The above listing is a very simple menu shell that could be used to write a database in *ARexx*. The listing starts by defining the *ARexx* carriage return character which is used to insert blank lines. This is placed into a variable called 'CR'. Once this is done, the script enters a 'Do Until' loop that is performed until the variable 'Option' contains a value of five.

We haven't actually covered the 'Do Until' option yet, but it's simple enough – all code between the lines 'Do Until Option=5' and the final 'End' statement are performed in a loop until the 'Option' variable contains five.

The script then displays the menu using a series of 'Say' commands that simply display text directly onto the screen – note how the 'CR' variable is used to insert blank lines removing the need for additional 'Say' commands.

Once the menu has been displayed, the script then asks the user to enter the option that they would like using the 'Pull' command.

Now for the exciting bit – the script then enters our 'Select...When' construct. Each option is individually processed using its own 'When' command.

At the moment the script does nothing more than inform the user that the option was accepted, but you could quite easily extend the script yourself so that it called your own functions to handle the database's operations. We'll be covering functions and procedures very soon, so stay tuned. CU

AREXX UNDER CONTROL

Last month, we started our look at how *ARexx* can be used to control external applications with an explanation of *ARexx* message 'ports'. As you will remember, *ARexx* can control the operations of any *ARexx*-compatible application by sending commands to the application via its *ARexx* port. All *ARexx*-compatible applications have an *ARexx* port which has its own unique name. Accessing an application via an *ARexx* script is very simple indeed. All you have to do is to add the line 'Address' followed by the name of the *ARexx* port that you're attempting to communicate with which must be enclosed by a set of speech marks. Say, for example, you wanted to open communication with ASDG's *Art Department Professional*. All you'd have to do is to enter the following line at the beginning of your script.

```
Address 'ADPro'
```

It's worth noting that the port name is case sensitive, so entering 'adpro' or 'ADPRO' will not work. If the application is loaded, communication between *ARexx* and that application will be established but there may be cases where *ARexx* is unable to link with the application. The most common cause of failure is when an application hasn't been loaded. You can check whether *ARexx* is capable of opening an application's *ARexx* port using the following section of code. Obviously you'll need to substitute 'ADPro' for the name of the message port that you want to access.

```
If Show(ports,'ADPro') = 0 then
Say "Unable to open message port..."
Exit
End
```

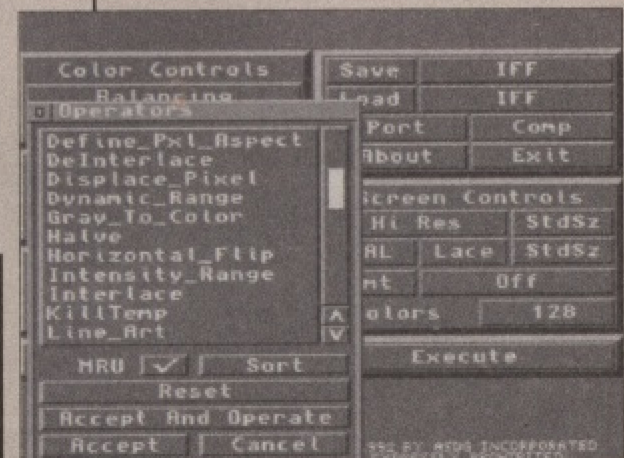
There is one message port that you can always access without having to worry about whether an application has already been loaded – AmigaDOS. *ARexx* treats AmigaDOS simply as another task that it can control and communication is established simply by using the 'Address' command to open up a port called 'Command'. Instead of accessing internal functions built into an application, however, *ARexx* allows you to run AmigaDOS commands in exactly the same way as you would from the Shell. Here's a small demonstration listing for you to play with.

```
/*
AmigaDOS 'Command' demonstration
By Dave Smithson
*/

Address Command

Say "You have the following memory
available..."

/* Run AmigaDOS 'Avail' command */
Avail
Exit
```



By sending commands to an application's *ARexx* port, its operations can be automated almost completely.

NEXT MONTH

Now we've examined a couple of decision making and flow control constructs we'll be taking our look at *Arexx* one step further by looking at file handling. We'll also be making the first movements towards writing scripts to control external applications.

DIY PARNET

John Kennedy shows you what to do when one Amiga isn't quite good enough – network!

Linking two Amiga computers together has recreational as well as serious benefits, and with a little ingenuity it doesn't even require any hardware other than a simple cable. You might be surprised at how much support for networking is already present in the Amiga operating system.

Although only the CD32 (allegedly) has any direct network support, every other Amiga is capable of communication with only a few extra pieces of software.

Probably the simplest way to link machines is via the serial port – after all, communications is what the exciting world of RS232 is all about.

SERIAL LINKING

To connect two computers via the serial port you'll need two 25-way D-type female (socket) connectors, and a good length of three-way cable. As RS232 communications use relatively large 12 volt voltage swings, the length of wire can be considerable. Two Amiga computers in different rooms can be linked, and perhaps even reaching to your next door neighbour's house as well.

I have to point out that a very long cable could theoretically damage the port, especially if poor-quality wiring was used, although I have never heard of this happening. For really long links, you might be better experimenting with MIDI interfaces, as the MIDI standard incorporates an opto-isolator which electrically separates the computer from the cabling.

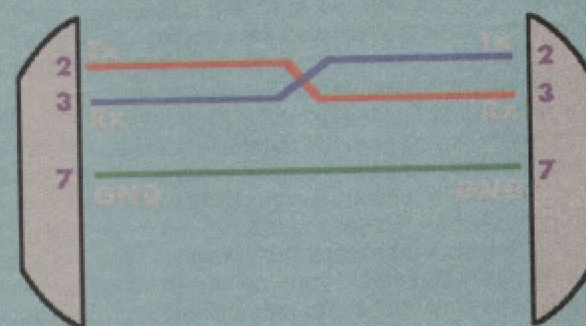
Making up a serial link cable is dead easy – all you need is a fine-tipped soldering iron and a little spare time. If you don't feel happy about it, you can even nip into a high street electronics store and ask for an Amiga compatible Null Modem cable (the Amiga puts 12 volts on pins 9 and 10, and you don't want these sent back up your port, believe me – I've tried it). You'll pay slightly more for a cable than if you made it yourself, but that's how it goes.

Figure 1 shows the wiring details, and as you can see they are not complicated. Connect pin 2 (Transmit data) of the first connector to pin 3 (Receive data) of the second. Then connect pin 3 (Receive data) of the first to pin 2 (Transmit data) of the second.

Finally connect pin 7 (Signal ground) of both together to form a common ground. If possible you should check the cabling with a multimeter before using it, as any short circuits could damage the computer.

Only when you are sure the cables are okay, switch off the computers and plug in the wires. The best way to check everything is working is to run a Comms program such as *NComm* or *Term* on each machine. Assuming the baud rates, word length and parity values are set to be the same, anything you type on the first computer will appear on the second and vice versa.

FIGURE 1 - Here are the connections which need to be made to link two serial ports. There are only three wires: pins 2 and 3 and swopped and both pins 7 are connected.



If you don't happen to have *NComm* handy, don't worry – the Workbench can be used instead. Boot up both machines and check the Serial Preferences so that the baud rates are the same, and there is no handshaking protocol. (The RTS/CTS method requires that an extra two wires – pins 4 and 5 – are swopped like 2 and 3.) Now open a Shell window, and enter NEWSHELL AUX: at the prompt (you may need to enter MOUNT AUX: first). On the second Amiga a shell process will start, and commands such as DIR will actually list the contents of the first computer's disk. For more fun things to do with shared computers, check out Bruce Smith's Publishing's (tel: 0923 894 355) *Mastering AmigaDOS 2 volume One*, price £21.95, which includes an entire chapter on the subject.

GAMES LINKING

Many games offer a link-up option, whereby two players can use two computers to play against each other. Programs such as

>netpnet-server unit 0
>mount net:

Commodore CDTV

The ultimate Parnet set-up: a tasty Amiga 4000 networked to a bargain CDTV. The A4000 can then read CD-ROM drives as though the ROM drive were any ordinary device.

Stunt Car Racer, *Lotus Turbo*, *Falcon* and *Populous* have become classics, at least in part due to the two-player option. All these games require the serial ports to be linked together using exactly the sort of cable just described. Please believe me when I say that two player games such as *Stunt Car Racer* become an entirely new experience when two human players are involved.

NETWORKING

In the fun (not) world of the IBM compatible PC, networking implies the sharing of disks and printers. In a LAN or 'Local Area Network', a powerful PC acts as a file server and several smaller PCs share the file server's hard drive and peripherals. It is possible to add an Amiga into this sort of chain using Ethernet cards, but when only two Amigas are involved the solution lies in a public domain program called *ParNet*. *ParNet* is worth its weight in golden floppies – in fact it's so good we put it on the cover disk in archived format. When *ParNet* is running on two Amigas and a suitable cable is connecting them, each Workbench gains a new icon called Network. This icon contains all the devices of the other machine, so, for example, an Amiga 500 connected to an Amiga 4000 gains the use of the A4000s hard drive and high density floppy. Probably the most interesting use of *ParNet* is to add a cheap CD-ROM drive to an Amiga set-up. For example, I'm typing this text on an Amiga 4000 (because I'm lucky enough to have one) and beside it on the desk is a CDTV I picked up in Dixons for £200. Both machines are running *ParNet*, and as a result I can directly read any CD-ROMS placed in the CDTV. I guess a lot of Amiga owners now own an A1200, but still have an A500 sitting around. Well, dig it out! If the A500 has 1Mb of Chip RAM (or can be expanded to have 1Mb) you can buy the Commodore A570 CD-ROM drive and *ParNet* the A500 and A1200 together.

The incredible thing is that the A570 now costs a measly £75 from Gasteiner (tel: 081 365 1151) and £99 from Silica Systems (tel: 081 309 1111) which makes them the cheapest CD-ROM drives in the known universe.There is so much software available on CD-ROM, you would be mad to miss this opportunity to gain access.

PARALLEL LINKING

To use *ParNet*, you'll first need to make up the special cable. You can't buy this one over the counter, as it is only useful for running *ParNet*. The authors of *ParNet* recommend you buy a ready-made parallel port cable with plugs at both ends, take it apart and cut and re-solder the necessary wires.

For best results this is the way to go, but dedicated solder fiends like myself will probably want to solder the cable up from scratch. If you buy the ready-made cable, don't plug it in before you have made the alterations – if you do you'll nuke your Amiga. If you do want to DIY, you'll need two 25-way D-type male(plug) connectors (not the same as the serial port connectors!) and a length of ribbon cable with at least 12 strands. *Figure 2* shows the connections you'll need to make.

DIY EXTRA PARTS

Serial Cable: A length of 3 core cable
Two 25 Way D-Type connectors (female)
Solder Casing and screws for D-type connectors
Parallel Cable: A length of 14 way ribbon cable
Two of 25 Way D-Type connectors (male)
Solder Casing and screws for D-type connectors
Copy of *ParNet* software on the cover disk
All parts available from electronic supply stores, or from mail order companies such as Maplins.

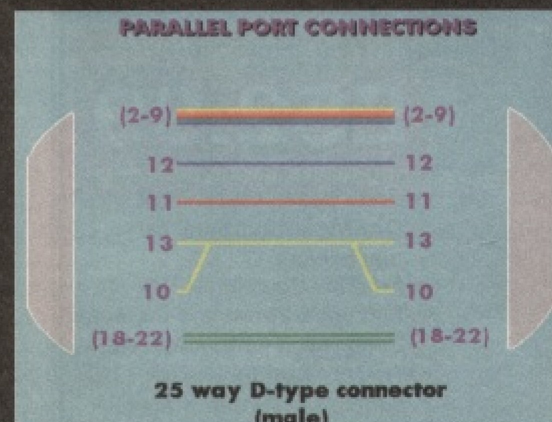


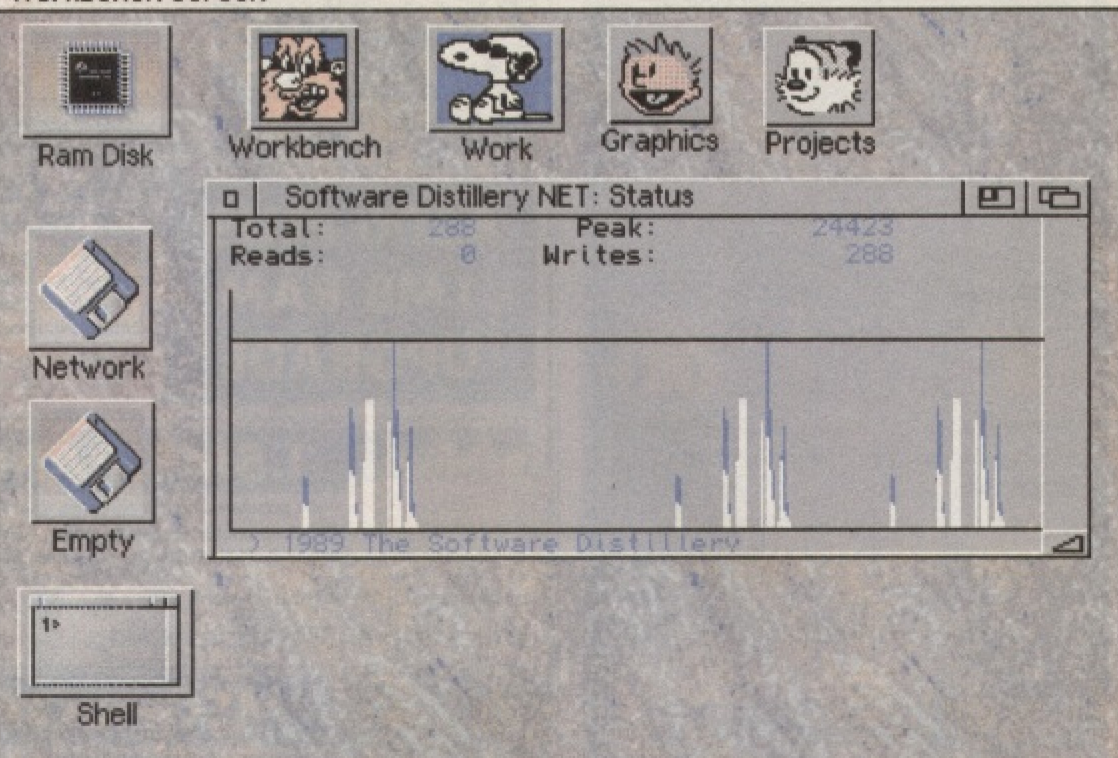
FIGURE 2 - The parallel link cable can either be constructed from scratch, or made by adapting an existing cable. Remember to switch off power before connecting any cables.

Note that pins 10 and 13 need to be shorted at each end. Although the instructions specify pins 18-22 should be connected for a ground, I have used only one ground and have had no problems. If there are any spare wires in your ribbon cable, it might be a good idea to use them anyway. The entire process shouldn't take more than a quarter of an hour, two burnt fingers and a solder stain on your Amiga keyboard.

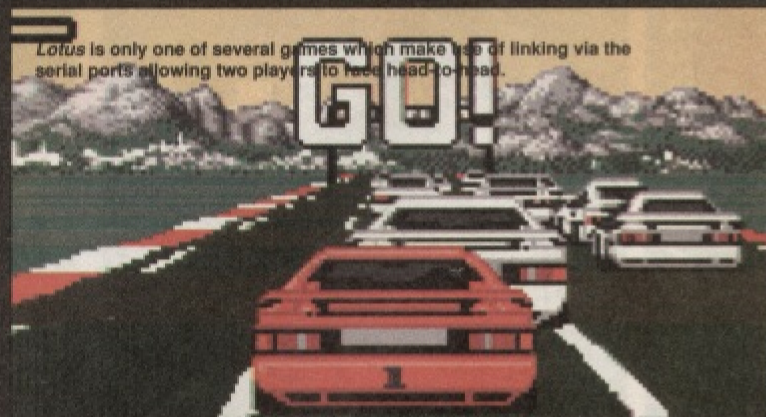
Again, check the wiring before plugging it, and never (ever) connect the cables with the machine switched on. Before you can use *ParNet*, you will need to install the software.

This is a rather tricky SHELL operation I'm afraid, but there are good instructions included in the archive if you get stuck. If you find what follows impossible, there are several disks in the public domain which come with everything already set-up for you. The first step is to unarchive the files to the RAM disk, a process covered in the disk pages.

There are eight files present, including three text files which you should read carefully (use MORE). You'll then need to copy parnet device to the DEVS:directory of both boot disks, then netpnet-handler to the l:directory and netpnet-server to the C:, again on both machines.You then need to add an entry to the Mountlist. *Workbench 3* machines don't actually come with a mountlist, so in these cases you simply copy the supplied mountlist file into DEVS:. On other machines, you need to add the mountlist to the end of the existing file, so get out your favourite text editor and APPEND. The *ParNet* trick is to make the mountlist in one machine unit=1, and the other unit=0. Then you have to run the server (which is usually done by the user-startup file). On the machine which has UNIT=1, type NETPNET-SERVER UNIT 0 and on the machine with UNIT=0, use NETPNET-SERVER UNIT 1. Remember to include the word UNIT – weird things happen if you don't.



The program NetStat which comes in the *ParNet* package, will keep an eye on your network and indicate the sort of transfer rate you can expect.



Lotus is only one of several games which make use of linking via the serial ports allowing two players to race head-to-head.

TESTING

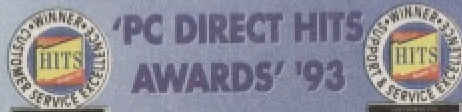
With the cable connected, the software installed and the servers running you should be ready to test your handicraft. On both computers enter MOUNT NET: at a Shell. You should find new icons appears, although for the moment they will be empty. Before a network device can be used, it must be mounted – and the easiest way to do this is with an ASSIGN statement. Here is how to use the floppy disk on the other machine:enter ASSIGN df3: NET:df0 and now if you type DIR df3: your computer will list the other machine's drive. For details on how to get icons, consult the documentation which came with *ParNet*. CU

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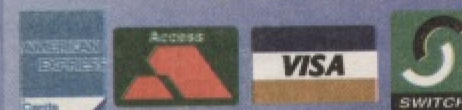
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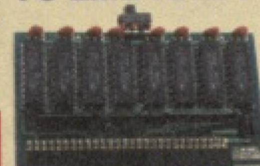
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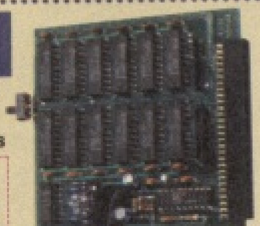


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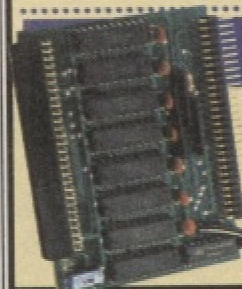
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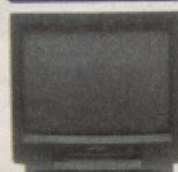
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REPLACEMENT A500 INTERNAL 3.5" DRIVE KIT



Fully compatible, with 1Mb unformatted capacity. Straightforward installation procedure. Kit includes full fitting instructions.

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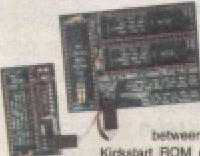
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A500 ROM SWITCHER



SWITCHING BETWEEN VERSIONS OF KICKSTART ON YOUR A500 IS EASY WITH OUR NEW ROM SWITCHER!

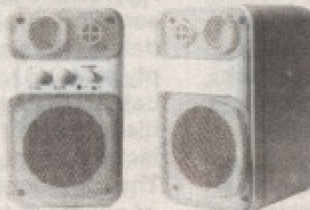
You can improve software compatibility on your A500 Plus! By fitting our ROM switcher, you can alternate between the Kickstart 2 already resident and another version of Kickstart ROM chip, giving you the freedom of choice. Fitting is very simple indeed, and requires *no soldering* or special technical knowledge. Fitting allows two methods of switching; either by keyboard reset, or by an external toggle switch. **N.B. Kickstart ROM not supplied. A500 Revision 5 boards will require circuit modification.**

ONLY £24.95

Kickstart 1.3 ROM supplied separately	only £29.95
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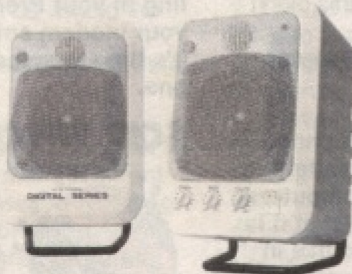
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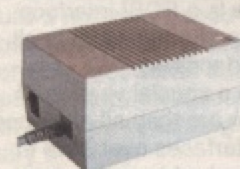
Features 15W/channel, built-in power amplifier with volume control, bass/treble controls, and detachable stands.

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R Reference A500 HARD DISKS

All the features ...without the price

AMIGA FORMAT March 1993 Verdict **84%**

"Very attractive indeed - you get a good deal for a decent drive."

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2Mb RAM Version: ADD £94
4Mb RAM Version: ADD £188

- ★ SCSI HARD DISK MECHANISMS for optimum performance, fast Access Time & Autoparking
- ★ Includes its own DEDICATED PSU. CBM recommends against use of Hard Disks without independent power supply.
- ★ Option for up to 4MB additional easy RAM EXPANSION, using 'SIMMS'
- ★ COOL.... by popular demand, we have fitted a Cooling Fan!
- ★ GAME SWITCH allows Games to be loaded without disconnection
- ★ Includes SCSI THROUGHPORT at rear for further expansion
- ★ Compatible with Reference Add-On Hard Drive and Reference RAM unit
- ★ High quality metal casing, colour and style matched to the Amiga 500
- ★ Includes 'HD Setup 3' (external SCSI low level format and partition utility) and 'MRBACKUP PRO' (backup utility)

R Reference A500 RAM UNIT

- ☆ RAM access LED
- ☆ RAM test/run switch
- ☆ Uses 1Mb 4-bit ZIPS
- ☆ Style matched to the A500
- ☆ Very low power consumption
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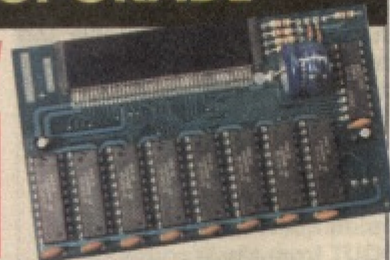
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Prices Include VAT, Delivery and Connection Cable

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The *Quiet* Matrix Printer

The KX-P2123 offers quiet operation, colour, Super Letter Quality printing and extensive paper handling features in a reliable and trusted design. A winning combination at an affordable price.

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- **24 PIN Diamond** Printhead high quality output.

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Hewlett-Packard Deskjet 310 Colour upgrade kit	£45.83
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Hewlett-Packard Deskjet 550C Colour	£457.08
Canon BJ-10SX Inkjet Printer	£210.33
Canon BJ-200 Inkjet Printer 360dpi, up to 240cps, 8 fonts, 80-sheet feeder, IBM and Epson emulation	£339.58
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Mat Broomfield and John Kennedy get their hands dirty, as they answer this month's volume of readers' questions.

HERE THEY ARE FOLKS - THE Q&A TEAM



JOHN KENNEDY
Can you stump Norris? There's a prize of a poke in the eye for anyone clever enough to stump our resident Amiga tech-head.



MAT BROOMFIELD
With more years spent than he'd care to remember with his head in a circuitboard, Mat's to the Amiga what Edison was to the lightbulb.

OVERDRIVIN' THE A600

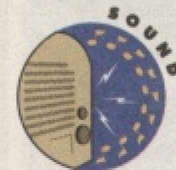


I want to know if the Overdrive hard disk (reviewed in October's CU AMIGA) will work on the A600 as well as the A1200?
Matthew McArthur, Sanday, Orkney.

A quick call to Amiga gurus Software Demon confirmed my suspicion that the standard Overdrive 35 doesn't work with the A1200. Buy hey, don't cry Matthew – they produce a much smaller and neater Overdrive 25 which will work fine. Give Software Demon a call on 0736 331039.

A quick note for all A600 owners looking to add hard drives internally, check the Kickstart version number you have (use ABOUT from the Workbench screen). Some hard drives won't work unless this version number is 37.7xxx or greater.

DISCORDANT MED



I recently upgraded from a A500+ to an A1200, but I'm having a problem with *OctaMED Pro*. On the A500 it worked fine, but on the A1200 if I try to enter a chord using the chord button all it does is accept one keyboard input.

Is this a fault in the keyboard, or is it a software compatibility problem because of the faster processor?
David Swain, Shard End, Birmingham.

It was only yesterday that CU AMIGA's MED addict, mix-master Tony Horgan, was complaining about exactly the same problem. It's caused by a slight change in the keyboard hardware of the A1200, and affects several programs which try to read the keyboard at a very low level.

Although Intuition friendly, it appears that the author, Teijo Kinnunen, didn't use a 100% legal keyboard code, and as he is indisposed at present (doing his National Service, I believe) the fix will be slow in coming. At time of writing, the very latest version of *OctaMED* – version 5.01 – still displays the same bug. At this point I'd just like to gloat: it works fine on my A4000. Smirk mode on.

PC PROBLEMS



Is there any other way to make my A500 compatible with a PC other than buying a hardware PC emulator, as I find that they are very expensive? I would like to use packages such as *Lotus 1-2-3* and *Sage*, but my A500 won't do it by itself.
J. Moyle, Porth, Mid Glamorgan.

Readers with memories longer than Mr Moyle's will remember the review of *PC Task* in the November 1993 issue of CU AMIGA. This is a software-only emulator and it is ideal for running serious software such as *Lotus*. At £50 from Meridian Software it could be just what you are looking for, although it will run rather slowly. The KCS board isn't very expensive, and will run a great deal faster, so shop around.

If you happened to own an A2000 or any other 'big box' computer, you could have used one of the hardware Bridgeboard emulators, currently going for a song from Indi (tel: 0543 419999). The beauty of Bridgeboards is that they allow you to fit PC-style cards which means cheap video cards, IDE controllers for £20, networking, sound synthesiser cards and so on. The downside is that you need to run the terrible PC software.

THE A500 BLUES



I own an A500Plus and I am going to buy an A5000 upgrade board, but I don't know how much it costs.

I would also like to know which is the best: the A500Plus or the A600 because my friend keeps saying his A600 is better as it has Workbench 2.05 and mine is 2.04?
Stuart Witson, Tranent, Scotland.

The A5000 was a 68020 processor accelerator and memory expansion for the A500. I say was, because Solid State Leisure went out of business about six months ago. You might be lucky and get a secondhand one – I picked one up, with 1Mb of RAM, for the bargain price of £50. The FPU cost me another £20.

In my opinion the A500Plus is a lot better than the A600. Although the A600 is a lot neater and has a built in IDE interface, the A500Plus is much more expandable.

You can add SCSI hard drives and have up to 10Mb of RAM in an A500+, and the A600 is stuck with a lot less. The differences in Workbench are minimal.

KEYBOARD FAILURE



I have a problem with my A500's keyboard. Now and then the Caps lock light flashes on and off. This strange effect renders the entire keyboard useless.

Virus, I hear you say, but I have several virus checkers none of which find anything on my disks or in my memory.

After consulting a local information technology teacher I removed the battery from my memory upgrade and switched the machine off for a long period, but this didn't solve the problem either.
Mark Harrison, Market Deeping, Peterborough.

Your local information technology 'expert' knows absolutely nothing about Amiga computers. If he did he would know that it is impossible for a virus to live in the clock memory kept active by a battery as (a) there are only a few bytes and (b) the memory is never executed, as it is completely separate from the system memory.

What you should have been told is that your keyboard is broken, and needs to be replaced.

That's all there is to it. The flashing caps light is the give-away, as the keyboards CPU uses it to warn of failure.

WE ARE THE ROBOTS



I am interested in robotics and I would like to know whether there is a package that allows you to program in a way that allows access to the serial and parallel ports to control a motorised project. I have AMOS, but there doesn't seem to be any commands to do this.

Also, I have a modem but when I call a BBS all I get is Connect 1200 and a load or garbage. I read the doc files, and it said to make sure that the fonts are in the 'Fonts' folder: but they are.
Martin Keen, Stockport, Cheshire.

Any language can access the serial or parallel ports. To send data to the parallel port you simply pretend to print it. To send data to the serial port you open a file to the SER: or AUX: device instead of the floppy or hard disk. The ultra-cool *[because I wrote it, of course – John Kennedy]* language miniFORTH was given away on the December CU AMIGA coverdisk and it might be better suited to your needs.

Your Comms problem seems to be related to your modem. The Connect 1200 message indicates that it's trying to communicate at Prestel baud rates (a very, very slow 1200/75 baud or 1200/1200 baud) and, these days, practically all modems use 2400 baud as a minimum.

If your modem cannot go any faster (alter the serial speed setting in your Preferences and in your modem software), I'm afraid it's time to splash out on a new one.

SCSI SPECIAL



I recently bought an A1200 installed with a Seagate ST9144A hard drive. When I used SysInfo on the drive, it informed me that there is a SCSI interface present. I thought that A1200s all had IDE interfaces.

Do I have a special version of the A1200, or are they all equipped with SCSI interfaces over here in Belgium? Can I add another hard disk by connecting it to the SCSI interface?
Ludo Ghoos, Oostende, Belgium.

Sorry to disappoint you, but no matter what SysInfo may say you have an IDE interface in your A1200.

The Amiga 'pretends' the IDE interface present is a SCSI to make software more compatible, so I'm afraid there isn't a spare SCSI connector inside your machine to add SCSI hard drives to.

Several companies (GVP, Microbotics) have produced A1200 trapdoor cards with SCSI-2 interfaces if you are keen to expand.

PSION OF THE TIMES



I'm writing to you in a last ditch attempt for aid. I own a Psion series 3 as well as an Amiga 1200. Extra memory for the Psion costs a bomb. I read in the handbook that you can communicate with other computers if you have suitable serial communication software. Where do I get that software from?
Imey Ahmed, Old Trafford, Manchester.

All you need is a lead to connect the Psion to a standard RS232 serial port, as featured on the back of the Amiga. Then you can use any PD or Shareware comms software (NComm, Term, JRComm – available from any PD library for the price of a disk) to receive the files sent across.

NETWORKING



Hello, I have had an idea regarding your 'Build your own robot' section. I have purchased the 8-bit I/O port from Maplin electronics. Anyway, I thought it would be possible to build a networking box using it by connecting the outputs of the board to the inputs of other boards on other Amigas. The only problem would be writing the software.
Lee Matthews, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottingham.

Yup, it sure would be possible. As you guessed, the main problem would be the software as writing a multi-user networking system which would integrate perfectly into AmigaDOS is no mean feat. I reckon it would probably be faster and more convenient to built a network based on the MIDI standard, which provides a reasonably fast serial baud rate and opto-isolation at each interface, but hey, we're talking theoretically anyway.

For real networking, contact Oxxi on 0203 47333 as they produce a Novell Network interface – something that's really big in the PC world. For more affordable two-Amiga networking, try ParNet as detailed in this month's wonderful DIY pages.

NOVICE



I have recently bought an A600 – the kids love it to play games on, and so do I as a matter of fact. I have just started to buy your magazine, but I must admit that I don't understand half of what you are saying as I'm a complete novice.

However, I do want to exploit my Amiga to the fullest, so what books do you recommend for a person such as I?

I would like to know about programming, or at least what the programs mean and how to understand roots, dirs, subdirs and paths.
Rob Ford, Blaby, Leicestershire.

Hopefully the boxes filled with Jargon Busting definitions should help, as should be many tutorials that CU AMIGA runs with beginners in mind.

As far as books go, until I can find a publisher for my combined cookery-science fiction-AmigaDOS guide, you won't do much better than buying *The A600 Insider Guide*, written and published by Bruce Smith Books (tel: 0923 894355) which will take you by the hand from first principles through to advanced roots, dirs, subdirs and paths. An excellent read.

THE CDTV OWNER

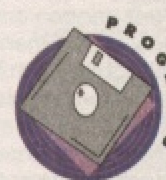


I own a CDTV with a floppy drive, keyboard and mouse. I would appreciate it if you answer the following questions for me:
1. I'm tired of using the ancient Workbench 1.3. Can the Kickstart ROM be upgraded to 2.04 as with other Amigas?
2. I would like to add another floppy drive to the CDTV. Is it possible to add a standard Amiga drive with a through connector?
3. I have heard about a board for the CDTV which allows up to 8Mb of RAM and a 68020. Is this fact or fiction?
4. Is VIDI-12 compatible with CDTV?
Paul Green, Meanwood, Leeds.

Ahh, so you are the other CDTV owner. I bought mine cheap in Dixons and I think it's great – perfect for using CD-ROM software on my A4000.
1. If the CDTV is your only Amiga you will be sick of the blue and orange Workbench 1.3. And here's the bad news: as far as I can tell, a new 2.04 ROM won't include the necessary code for controlling the ROM drive and as a result it won't work.

What you need are a set of the special developer – only ROMS that Commodore never released. If you get hold of them, don't tell anyone – except me that is, as I really, really, really want them.
2. An extra floppy can be added in this way without problems. Why not consider a hard drive? Indi are selling SCSI interfaces very cheaply, and a SCSI drive can be picked up for under £100.
3. I have heard rumours of a board called the Blizzard, with a 16MHz 68000 and 8Mbs of RAM, but none has materialised. Pity, as I'd like one too. It appears that the 2Mb Chip RAM MegaChip expansion is the only way to expand CDTV memory, but if anyone knows otherwise please let me know.
4. Yup, as long as you specify you need Workbench 1.3 software so Rombo can send you the right kit.

AGA PROGRAMMING



I have been an avid reader and collector of CU AMIGA since May 1992, in fact it has been the reviews in the mag that persuaded me to buy the Amiga 4000/040 that I now proudly own.

Before I get stuck into my loud screech for help I would like to mention a few problems I have had with my computer:
1. The 1960 monitors are not really worth the money you pay, unless my monitor is the only one that doesn't seem much better than the 1084 that I had with my 500.
2. For some unknown reason my drive refuses to format high density disks and seems to bail out at track 72 upwards. This is not too much of a problem since all the software I have received has come on the low format anyway but I still feel a bit cheated. I can't really afford (financially or otherwise) to send my beloved back to get something so simple fixed.

Now onto my main plea. I have recently purchased SAS C version 6.2. It looks great and it's full of things difficult to get a grasp of. I have picked it up quite quickly and I have a good idea of the basic principles.

What it comes down to is the books don't cater for the new screen modes and the new 32 bit technology but the software does.

Since you are all such a lovely bunch of beer drinkers at CU would you be kind enough to suggest a few books and maybe some P.D. disks that would be appropriate for the knowledge that I seek. Thanks.
Dan Harrison, United Arab Emirates.

Thanks for your words of praise. You would think that with all the »

COMMON QUERIES

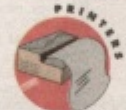
Every month the post bag contains about ten letters on each of the following topics. Here are some global answers:

CD32 ADD-ON



Q. When is the CD-ROM add-on for the A1200/A4000 coming out and where will it fit? Will I be able to use my RAM expansion/accelerator/hard drive?
A. *Listen people. Commodore's engineering don't ring me up and say: "Psst John, don't tell anyone but the CD-ROM drive will be out next week and it connects to the parallel port." We only pick up information that is publicly announced, and when we do you can read it in the news pages.*
Here is what we know so far:
1. The CD-ROM drive will be out sometime for the A1200. An A4000 one is planned. Drives for the A600 and A500 are not possible.
2. The drive will connect via the trap door. This means you need to remove whatever is already fitted there.
3. We don't really know if there will be another trapdoor in the CD-ROM drive casing for connecting memory or accelerators.
4. The A1200 should support the 12 button controllers via a special piece of software which authors will need to add to their new games.
5. It will probably be necessary to update the A1200's ROMs to use the CD-ROM drive.
6. An add-on for the A1200 which adds IDE and floppy interfaces, and serial and parallel ports is planned, but I haven't seen any yet.
7. The FMV cartridge launch is imminent.

PRINTER DRIVERS



Q. I have a printer made by – eg Epsom – and I don't know which printer driver to use. Please help.

A. *Ring up the printer manufacturer and ask them. Honestly, they'll know better than we will – they should even supply you with a driver on disk, like printers sold by Silica Systems. If all else fails, try the EpsonX, the EpsonXold and the generic in that order.*

KEYMAPS



Q. Please help me. My trouble is with my printer. I can't get my keyboard to print pound signs, I keep getting dollars and hashes.
A. *Ah, keymaps. Make sure you have copied the GB keymap from the Storage floppy disk to the DEVS: drawer on your Workbench. Make sure you have set the LOCALE editor so that the country is the UK and the preferred language is English.*

EPIC

AGA Software Specialists

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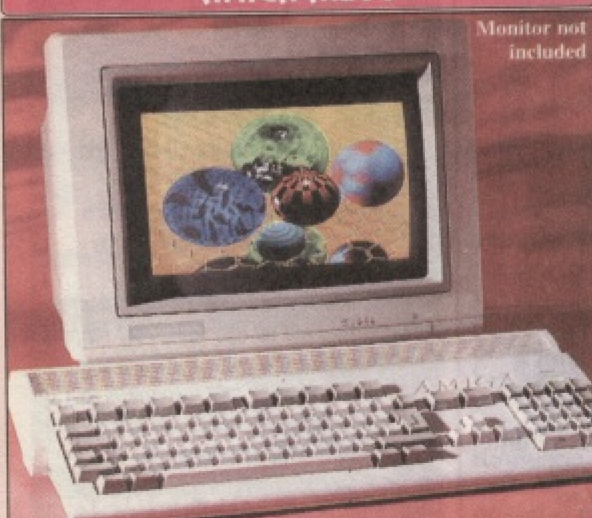








AMIGA A1200



Specifications
- 96 key keyboard with numeric key pad
- 32bit Architecture, Amiga dos 3
- 2 meg ram as standard (expandable)
- AA chipset, 16.8 million colours
- 12 months on-site warranty by LCL/Wang
- 68020ec Processor, 14.19 mhz
- Built-in TV modulator
- PCMCIA smart card slot
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Option 1 — WORTH OVER £80
Thunder Birds game
Nigel Mansell AGA
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& 20 PD disks of your choice
FREE!

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& 20 PD disks of your choice
ADD JUST £50 TO PRICES BELOW

A1200	0Mb HARD DISK	64Mb HARD DISK	85Mb HARD DISK	127Mb HARD DISK	209Mb HARD DISK	XXXMb HARD DISK
2 Meg System	£289 ☐ EPC1224	£439 ☐ EPC1464	£489 ☐ EPC1485	£519 ☐ EPC1527	£589 ☐ EPC1609	P.O.A. ☐ EPCXXX
4 Meg System	£389 ☐ EPC1224-4	£539 ☐ EPC1464-4	£589 ☐ EPC1485-4	£619 ☐ EPC1527-4	£689 ☐ EPC1609-4	P.O.A. ☐ EPCXXX-4

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- ☐ AIRBUCKS £18.49
- ☐ ALIEN BREED 2 £22.99
  Very stylish game
- ☐ BODY BLOWS GALACTIC £22.99
  THE best beat'em up available, unreal 256 colour action
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  Fast arcade racing game
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- ☐ CIVILIZATION £25.99
- ☐ DENNIS £19.49
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- ☐ JAMES POND 2 £9.99
  Enhanced A1200 version of this very addictive platformer
- ☐ ISHAR 2 £18.99
- ☐ JURASSIC PARK £19.49
  The biggest game of the year, based on the smash hit film. Smooth multi-directional scrolling action
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- ☐ OSCAR £19.99
- ☐ PINBALL FANTASIES £22.99
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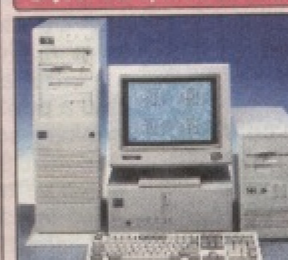


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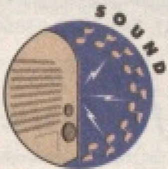
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» sales of Amigas we are responsible for, Commodore would be grateful to us wouldn't you?
1. My 1960 is fine - the flicker free graphics modes have revolutionised my Workbench. There does seem to be wide variations in quality though between different monitors: besides the inch of useless screen to the left, many screens seem to have inferior resolution. In any case, the 1960 has now been discontinued in favour of the much, much better 1940s and 1942s. I notice a few pieces of scan doubling hardware coming onto the market, and I dearly want to try one out to see if they improve matters. A review will appear as soon as we get hold of one.
2. If you are using high quality high density disks and the problem persists, it is definitely a case of a duff drive. Doesn't the on-site warranty cover your part of the world? You can buy extra high density drives from Power Computing (0234 843388) if that's any help.
Commodore haven't yet released details on the AGA chipset (which is what you want) at the time of writing. The only way to get them is to become a registered developer. As far as PD information goes, I strongly suggest you get the Amiga C Encyclopedia and register for the extra facts on graphics programming – including details on writing games. For AGA information, hunt out the HowToCode series written by my hero, ace hacker ComradeJ. This document will tell you everything you ever needed to know but where afraid to ask about the Amiga hardware. I'd love to ask the Ed to print it all in the magazine, but the OS Legal Fundamentalists would throw a fit and threaten violence. So pretend I didn't mention it.
Thanks for the Art Gallery submission by the way – unfortunately our moral guardian Ms Lisa Collins is easily offended by such subject matter and would deliberately sabotage the pictures. She even gets offended by Donuts believe it or not.

GONE TO THE BIRDS



One of my pasttimes is birdsong recording, and it occurred to me that since some music programs seem to be capable of inputting sound samples and displaying them on a monitor in a graph of frequency against time, it may be feasible to import birdsong and display them in the same way.

Birdsong, depending on species, has a range roughly of 1Hz to 20KHz. I have also started to record bats using a detector which converts their ultra-sonic sounds down to 20Hz to 20KHz (from 40KHz to 140+KHz).

P.S. Can I use the printer from an Amstrad 8512 computer with the Amiga, and which printer driver would I need?
G. Moss, Eccleshall, Stafford.

Well this has to be one of the most interesting letters this month. All Amiga samplers should be capable of sampling in the required rates, although those produced by Microdeal would be ideal, as they perform FFT (fast fourier transforms) on the samples for comparisons.
With a multimedia program such as *Hyperbook*, you could create a complete audio reference guide, and expand it to include bats as well.
P.S. Argh! You were going well until you got to the part about the printer. And as far as I know, the 8512 printer has a unique cable that won't work with the Amiga.

FASTER DOWNUNDER

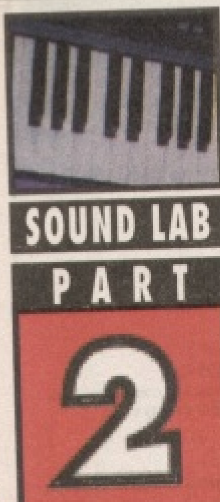


I'm a regular CU AMIGA reader, and I've recently bought an Amiga A1200 which I use for everything. I was wondering if you could answer a few questions for me:
1. I'm just getting into DeskTop Publishing and have bought a copy of *PageStream 2.0*. I've found it runs a little slowly, so I'm considering buying a Microbotics 50MHz 68030 accelerator with a program called GigaMem to handle virtual memory. Would I be better getting the accelerator with 2Mb of RAM instead?
2. Would a math coprocessor increase the speed of DTP more than a 68030?
3. My friend is lending me his PC clone for two months. He has fitted an internal v32.bis internal modem. Is it possible to connect the PC to my Amiga so I can use his modem to download files for my A1200?
4. If I buy an accelerator card in America, will it work in Australia?
5. How do you convert programs from IBM C to Amiga C to make the most of the Amiga hardware?
6. What's a good book to teach C programming on the Amiga?
7. Is there currently a company selling a casing for the A1200 that allows you to add Zorro cards like the A4000, something like Checkmate were offering for the A500?
8. Is it possible to increase the speed of the computer by using a memory cache besides the command AddBuffers?
Lube Saveski, Dianella, Australia

1. To make the most of the extra processing power a faster processor offers, you need to have extra memory. Even adding fast memory to the stock A1200 increases speed twofold. Perhaps this would be your best bet: buy a 4 or 8Mb expansion for the A1200. If you choose carefully and buy one which uses memory in the form of SIMMs (and not ZIPs) there is a good chance the SIMM can be used in an accelerator, if you eventually decide to buy one.
2. A maths coprocessor will make very little, if any, difference in speed. Apart for some picture rotation and scaling options, most DTP work isn't a lot of calculations and is simply hard slog for the processor.
3. There is no need to connect them (although you could do it with a NULL MODEM cable). Simply download the Amiga files to the PC, and save them to floppy disk. The A1200 comes with CrossDos, a utility which can read and write PC disks.
4. The accelerator will work fine. Only video standards (and mains current frequencies) vary between continents – not CPU speeds.
5. Simple. All you have to do is rewrite the code using the blitter, the copper, the Intuition environment and re-compile using all the Amiga's include libraries. That was sarcasm, by the way – you need to rewrite the entire program from scratch to make the most of the Amiga's more advanced hardware.
6. You'll have to get the official ROM Kernal books. They are expensive and hard going, but you'll need them.
7. Not that I've heard of. Apparently MediaSource (0247 471882) are planing a PC-style case and separate keyboard for the A1200 to hold extra drives, but no Zorro slots. Chances are you would be better buying an A4000/030 for full Zorro-III compatibility.
8. Hmm, depends what you mean. Upping the AddBuffers in the startup-sequence will make disk access faster, as the contents are temporarily stored in memory. This won't affect processing speed, only make directories and short read/write operations faster. The 68010 and better processors all have memory caches on-board, but you can't alter the size of them as the cache memory is actually on the CPU chip. Sorry, no cheap and easy speedy upgrades this way.

NEXT MONTH

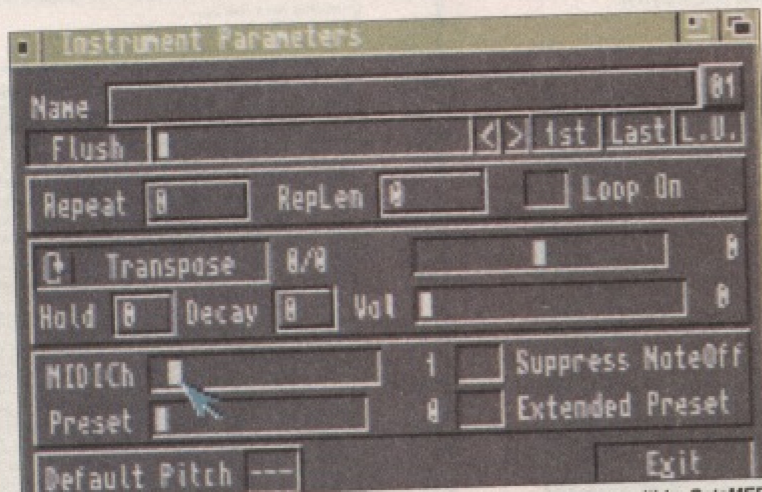
More problems answered by John and Mat, so get writing to Q&A, CU Amiga, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. No SAEs please as we cannot personally reply to all the letters we receive.



SOUNDLAB

They said it couldn't be done, but they were wrong... they should never have underestimated the powers of Professor Von Horgan and part two of his cunningly bacon-flavoured *OctaMED 5* tutorial...





The midi menu on the left and the control panel on the right are the main areas used to set up your MIDI sounds from within *OctaMED 5*. You won't need to worry about half of the options on the MIDI menu to start with, so don't worry if it all looks a bit confusing.

Go on, get a MIDI synth, or maybe a drum machine. The fab and groovy thing about that, is you can use your new kit with your existing *OctaMED* set-up with hardly any bother at all. Thanks to the wonderful invention that is MIDI, you can hook up your Amiga to just about any synth or drum machine from the last decade. All you need is a MIDI interface (about £30 from numerous ads in this issue) and a couple of MIDI leads (available from Tandy). Now that *OctaMED 5* can use up to 64 tracks, there's no excuse to miss out.

MIDI THEORIES

MIDI cables do not carry sound. Instead, they carry information for the computer, synth or drum machine, which tells the device at the other end what sound to play. For instance, if you were to play a short middle C note on your synth keyboard, a message would be sent down the cable that would read something like, 'Note: middle C, duration 2 seconds, volume 50, no pitch bend, no modulation.' The sequencer would be rolling along in record mode, listening out for any messages, and when it got news that you'd hit a middle C, it would store all of the information at the current point in the song. You could then go back to the start of the sequence, hit play, and when it reached the point where you played the middle C, it would send exactly the same information back to the synth. The synth would now be listening, and would be told to play middle C for two seconds with all the appropriate modulation, volume and pitchbend settings.

Multi-timbral synths and drum machines can usually play different sounds at the same time, so you can layer one sound on top of another. *OctaMED* can play MIDI instruments and Amiga samples simultaneously, so its the ideal way to expand your basic sample-based tunes.

SETTING UP FOR MIDI

The first thing you need to do is select MIDI Active from the MIDI menu. Without this turned on, none of the MIDI functions work. A letter 'M' will appear next to the 4Ch indicator (in the middle of the top section) to let you know when MIDI mode is active. You can then set up your first instrument.

Move to a blank instrument slot, and click in the instrument name box (just beneath the menu bar in the middle of the screen). Let's say you wanted to use a piano sound from your keyboard. In that case you'd type in 'Piano' in the instrument name box. You could type in 'Bananas on Toast' if you wanted – it wouldn't make any difference to the sound, but you'd have to remember that the instrument you called 'Bananas on Toast' was actually a piano sound from your keyboard.

You now need to click the Instrument Parameters button. Set the MIDICh slider to 1, or whatever MIDI channel you want to use, then close the window. At this point, you should be able to check that everything is working by playing the sound from the Amiga keyboard. Your MIDI device should be set up to receive on the current MIDI channel, or preferably all MIDI channels. Change the Amiga keyboard octave range to 3-4 with the function keys or the octave gadget. Now when you hit any key on the QWERTY or ZXCVBN row, your MIDI device should make a noise.

If nothing happens, first check that your MIDI cables are connected properly (MIDI out to MIDI in and vice versa). Also check that your MIDI device is set up to relieve on the current channel. Go back to the instrument parameters box, and change the MIDI channel, playing a few notes on each channel. This is an easy way to see if your MIDI device is receiving on any unexpected channels.

PICKING YOUR SOUNDS

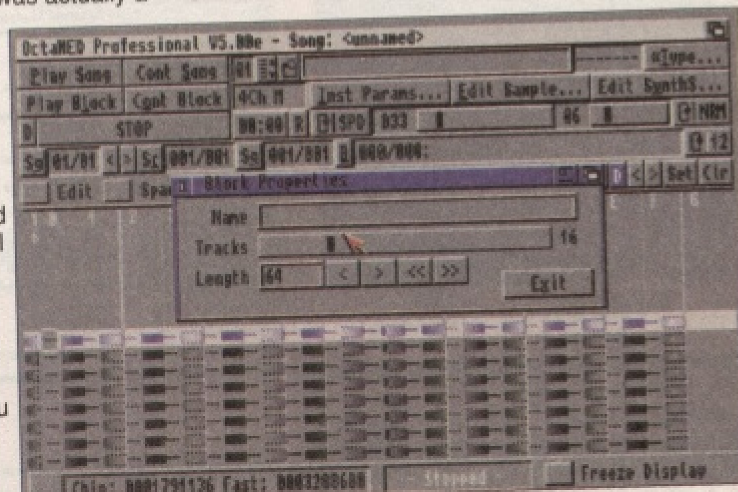
Once you've got some noise coming from your synth, you can select the sound you want either from the synth or from *OctaMED*.

If you leave the Preset slider set to zero (in the instrument parameters box), then the sound you hear will depend on which sound has been assigned to the current MIDI channel at the synth end. Alternatively, if you move the Preset slider, *OctaMED* sends a program change message to the synth, telling it which sound to play on that channel.

The Preset slider goes up to 128, but if your synth has more than 128 sounds, you may be able to use the Extended Preset option to access the rest of them. This puts the Preset slider's maximum value up to 2800, although not all synths will be compatible in this mode. The main advantage of setting the sound with the Preset slider, is that when you come back to the song on another day, you won't need to set the sounds on your synth again – their preset numbers will have been stored with the song data. On the other hand, if you leave the Preset number at zero, you can easily change the sounds on your keyboard whenever you like, without *OctaMED* changing them back again.

RECORDING

You can record MIDI music with both the Amiga keyboard and your MIDI keyboard. If you want to use your MIDI keyboard, you'll need to turn on the Input Active option from the MIDI menu. Also, you'll need to set the Input Channel from the same menu, which should match the channel of the MIDI sound you want to record, and also the channel on which your synth is transmitting. Now you can put *OctaMED* into Edit mode, and record with either keyboard just as you would if you were using samples.



If you've got particularly good eyesight and a very high resolution monitor, you can view up to 16 tracks at once in *OctaMED*, with up to 64 available with MIDI.

If you want *OctaMED* to record the length of time that you hold down the keys (when you're recording from a MIDI keyboard), select Read Key-Ups from the MIDI menu. Similarly, if you want note velocities recorded, select Read Volume.

That should be enough to get you started on the MIDI front. Next month, we'll have a look at some of the more advanced MIDI features, such as multi-tracking and how to link two Amigas together to double your available sample tracks.



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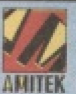
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512K - NO CLOCK	512K - WITH CLOCK
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A500PLUS - The A500PLUS has a battery backed clock built-in so these 1Mb RAM upgrades do not need this feature.

1Mb UPGRADE: **£30** INC VAT - RAM 0520

A600 - 1Mb RAM increase with battery backed clock.

1Mb - WITH CLOCK: **£40** INC VAT - RAM 0610



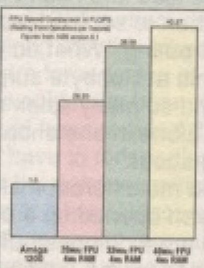
HAWK RAM UPGRADE & MATHS ACCELERATOR

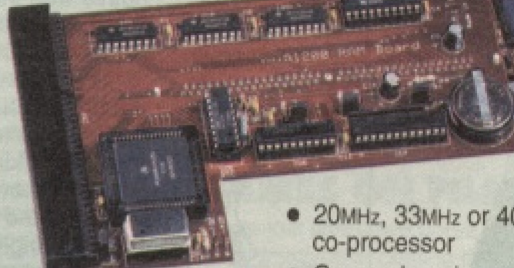
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BACKCHAT

If you're sat around at home, make new friends on the telephone, call 0..8..9..8..35..35..35......BACKCHAT! Well, maybe not, but you can write to Tony Dillon. Twice as saucy with none of the cost.

HELPFUL HOBBYTE

Following on from your request for information in the last issue of CU AMIGA on the whereabouts of the lifeform known as "The Helpful Dealer", I must tell you about my recent experience with Hobbyte Computing, St. Albans.

Once upon a time I decided that my Canon LBP8 Laser printer was no better at printing digitised images than my grandmother is at *Frontier*, so I decided that it was time for a new printer.

Not being able to choose between the different bubblejets/inkjets/ laserjets/ thermaljets/ whateverelsejets, I went off in search of a dealer who could point my Barclaycard in the right direction. Here are the results in all their glory:

1. Mail Order: 'No, you cannot see the printout before you part with your cash.'
2. Local dealer: 'Is that a 1200 SX or DX, 386 or 486 with cache....' (shut up)
3. Tottenham Court Road: 'I will beat their price, but we have to order it for you and you can't see it working because you haven't bought it.' (?)
4. Back page of a magazine dealer: 'I live in a house with three kids and I can't find enough room in the kitchen to set it up, sorry.'
5. Hobbyte Computing: 'What do we have here?'

The assistants at Hobbyte surprised me. It is not often you find so many sales assistants in one country let alone in one shop who know what they are talking about.

They showed me different makes of printer working, and even opened up a brand new BJC-600 just to give me a demonstration. They printed off my own images for me, and were generally friendly and helpful all round.

This is the sort of dealer to whom I will return to time after time for equipment and extras, not some box-shifting dump with time-wasting calculator/Psion organiser brandishing sons of the management who only want your cash.

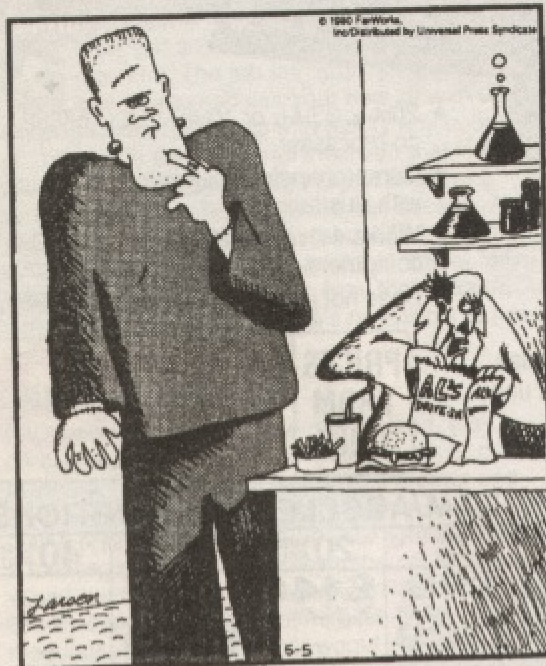
Viva Hobbyte, I recommend them to everyone and anyone.

Mark Haysman, Ilford, Essex.

If there is one thing we really need, it's staff who know what they are talking about. We've all gone to buy something, asked the assistant about it and watched them read the side of the box to you. It's a stereotype, sure, but unfortunately it's one that has proved to be true too many times.

Full marks to Hobbyte for actually training up their staff.

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



"What? No tartar sauce? You'd forget your own head if it wasn't bolted on!"

DISAPPOINTED DOWN UNDER

I'm starting to get a little confused about the future of the Amiga computer. Whilst David Pleasance seems to be optimistic, I simply wonder whether the direction we're headed in is the correct one. The future after all seems to be producing a PC machine. The operating system is going to be Windows NT and while being fully compatible with all PC applications which can run through NT or a 586 (the Pentium), won't it mean that the Amiga has essentially lost its identity? The Amiga will, in effect, simply be a PC clone, no longer a unique computer. Furthermore, it appears that no existing Amiga programs are going to be compatible with the new machine. No Amiga compatibility (for a while), complete PC compatibility and a PC operating system – will it still be an Amiga? After all the arguments in the letter pages as to whether the Amiga is a better computer than the PC, it seems that the PC has won.

D. Kitingan, Australia.

You've really answered your own point in this letter, D. By your own definition, the new Commodore machines aren't Amigas at all, but high-end PCs. Just because they are Commodore machines doesn't mean they have to be Amiga compatible. I remember the arguments against the Amiga because it wasn't compatible with the C64! The new technology will eventually end up in a new Amiga, but not just yet.

WORTH THE WAIT?

OOOH I'm SO ANGRY!!!!! Why I hear you ask? Let me explain! The root of my anger revolves around a particular bundle called *Desktop Dynamite* and the fact that I had no idea that it was even going to exist. Just three months ago I

TEAM TALK

As we embrace the new year and rush dramatically toward the year 2000, it's time to look forward to the coming months and make promises to ourselves that won't outlast the New Year hangover.

DAN SLINGSBY



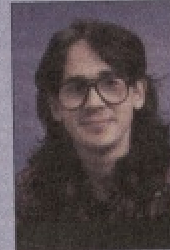
Well, as I'm off for pastures new this month, I don't suppose anything I write will actually see print here. I'll probably be made out to be a complete buffoon, rabbitting on about nothing in particular (as usual) and... no, no, they're at it already, stop it, I'll higher a top international lawyer and see you all in court for this...

LISA COLLINS



'I'll definitely stick to the original flatplan and won't bring any deadlines forward ever', says Lisa of the coming issues. Like heck. Her real response was to issue the decree, 'to have all the copy in within the first three days of the issue. With screenshots and all captions.' It's not the steely glint in her eye we worry about. It's the steel table leg she stole from the pub next door.

TONY DILLON



'To become a more public personality, and develop a more obliging image to the fans.' Oh dear. Ever since CU's hair bear got spotted at a show at the London Marquee by someone from New Zealand (Horgan's brother maybe?), he's been combing his hair, talking about personal appearances and demanding that we make sure there are no readers outside the office when he leaves.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

TV TAN

I watched the first programme of the new series of Bad Influence in the hope that there might be something on the Amiga CD32. There was, but if you blinked you would have missed it. There was a brief description of the machine as 'basically an Amiga A1200 with a CD drive'. I suppose this is an accurate description if you were to describe the new Escort Cosworth along the lines of 'a basic Escort with wider tyres and a spoiler.'

Worse was yet to come. There was a preview of the 3DO console and one of its upcoming games – *Microcosm*. You would have thought that Commodore would have made more of the opportunity to plug its products on this programme. Perhaps they could have invited the presenters to visit Commodore to show off the CD32 and the FMV add-on and then held a competition to win one of the machines.

Commodore have to advertise if they are to have any hope of making a success, but they must also make the maximum out of opportunities for new advertising presented to them and also seek out those opportunities. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to realise that the 'sit back and let it all happen by itself' attitude will only result in failure. After all, Bad Influence must be desperate for features if they spend 10 minutes on personal organisers.
David Burley, Bridgend.

Like they say, David, any news is good news, and the fact that the CD32 was on there at all is enough for most people. Bad Influence goes out for 25 minutes a week and is really aimed at the console market, which, regrettably, is a tad more interested in the 3DO than the CD32 . It's a bit much to blame Commodore, as they don't handle the scheduling. It's just the way TV people work. I remember filming an interview for Video View. I was there for over half an hour, extolling the virtues of computer games, and ended up on the box for just under two minutes. Such is fame.

decided that it was time to move on from my measly little A500 and upgrade to the new, all-powerful A1200. So I went along to my local shop and bought an A1200 for the bargain price of £300(ish). Now then, what did I get with my machine? Five Workbench disks and one game, the wholly unimpressive *Sleepwalker*.

As a student I need a really good wordprocessing program and as a budding computer artist I would really like to get hold of a copy of the incredible *Deluxe Paint IV AGA*. Ah, now we see the problem! You see, had I known that the *Desktop Dynamite* pack was going to exist, I would have waited a few months and paid the few extra pounds so that I could obtain the two programs of my desire. As it is, in order to obtain these two programs I now have to fork out around £150 or more and I'm sure you're aware that as a student I really don't have that kind of money to spend on the rent, let alone any software!!

What I'd really like to know is why was the A1200 originally released with such a pathetic pack containing nothing of any real interest (except of course *Workbench 3*), only to be upgraded later to a pack, which quite frankly I really would have preferred to have bought? Surely Commodore must have been planning that particular pack for several months since it would take that long to obtain the rights to provide the software in the pack. It would appear that no consideration was made of existing A1200 owners, since I'm sure I'm not alone in thinking that this situation is just a little unfair. A little extra forewarning of upcoming Amiga bundles would have been appreciated greatly, and would have avoided the anger I now feel at the fact I have to fork out large sums of money to obtain the software which I could have obtained at what is a hugely discounted price. Come on Commodore, get your act together and consider the consumer just once before releasing future, better Amiga bundles.
Dominic Smith, Northampton.

I had a long chat with Andy Leaning at Silica about this topic just the other day. Yes, the bundles do keep getting better and better, as bigger and better software comes to hand. Remember, when the A1200 was launched, *Wordworth AGA* and *Deluxe Paint IV AGA* didn't exist, so you couldn't have got them if you wanted. As it was, you got one of the best AGA specific packages around at the time.

As to why people shouldn't be told in advance of coming bundles, well, would you tell everyone what you were going to do tomorrow, knowing that it would mean that you wouldn't sell any today? Like you say, if you had known that the *Desktop Dynamite* pack was being released, you would have waited. By the same stroke, if you knew that a bigger, better package was being released next year, would you continue to wait?

STOP FIGHTING

Lots and lots of people have written into your magazine with arguments about how their computer is better than our Amiga and vice-versa and I think it's really dumb. For instance, Mr. James Bland (December 93) wrote in saying how ghastly the Mega CD is and all that twaddle, and then Mr. Christopher Ayers wrote in with that clip from a PC magazine. We don't need people quoting at us. If we wanted PCs we'd get them, right? I read your magazine because you're not always slagging off every other machine on the market. You just concentrate on the Amiga and don't bother with other machines. In your preview of *Star Trek*, for example, you mention how the sound was good on the PC without slagging it off.
I've used quite a few computers so far in my life, and personally I think it's fun to use any sort of machine. It doesn't matter what computer you've got, so long as you have fun with it.
Rob Burgess, Somerset.

Hear, hear Rob. That has banged the nail right on the head. Computers aren't about one-upmanship. They're there for a reason, and if they fulfil that purpose, then there's no point in stirring it up for others. After all, just because a certain Technical Editor went out one weekend and bought an expensive PC, and then came in on Monday slamming the PC Operating System, doesn't mean that Amiga's are best. Does it?

GAMES ON FILM

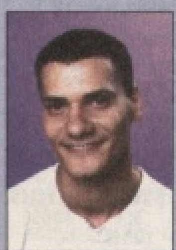
I have just spent two hours of a Sunday afternoon being involved in playing the greatest moviesque game I have ever seen, and have worked out how Commodore can sell thousands of CD32s.
1: Anyone who is anyone at CBM should run down to the nearest PC dealer and get them to pop a copy of *Rebel Assault* into a CD-Rom-equipped PC.
2: Then, when they have all picked up their jaws after seeing such awe-inspiring 3D ray traced models, listened to the excellent soundtrack and sound effects and marvelled at the 3D gameplay, they should all run back to HQ, grovel to the finance manager for as big a bundle of notes as possible and immediately jump on a plane to the U.S.
3: When they get there, they should run along to Lucas Arts and have a word in their ears and shove a few notes in their pockets and persuade them to convert this game for the CD32 and allow Commodore to bundle it with the machine.
4: When the game is ready, Commodore should send out demonstrators to every point of sale with a rolling demo of this game and stick it alongside a SNES showing off *Starwing* or anything on MegaCD.
5: Then just sit back and wait for sales to flood in.

Seriously, now that we have the Planar conversion chip, any chance that this stunning game will appear on CD32?
Anonymous, London.

It's funny, but it all seems so easy when you put it like that. The sad fact is that LucasArts aren't interested in producing games for the Amiga anymore, as the bulk of their market is in the US and the Amiga doesn't really have that large a base over there. With the launch of Amiga games magazines

»

MAT BROOMFIELD



'I simply must spend more time in the office', says CU AMIGA's Murray Minter. Mat hasn't been in all that often recently, having to put up with working at home and therefore being rudely awoken by phone calls as early as 11:30 in the morning! Still, with the *Buyer's Guide* out of the way, he'll soon be back in here bright and early, night and day like the rest of us. Ha.

TONY HORGAN



'To not come back', yells Tone over his shoulder as he sprints down the tarmac to catch up with the plane that's going to take him to New Zealand. When Dan threatens to kill him if he doesn't return, he quickly changes it to, 'To not have a bath all year and to only wear non-abrasive clothing, so that I can keep my deep tan until next Christmas'. Smug git.

JOHN KENNEDY



'To move the phone into the toilet. Tony Horgan has this annoying habit of always phoning me when I'm on the toilet.' Keep it clean, John, this isn't really the side of the magazine that people want to know about. 'Okay, how about tidying my room?' No, that's a bit too normal and regular. 'Yes, but not everyone's room is full of bits of metal shielding from nice shiny A1200s.'

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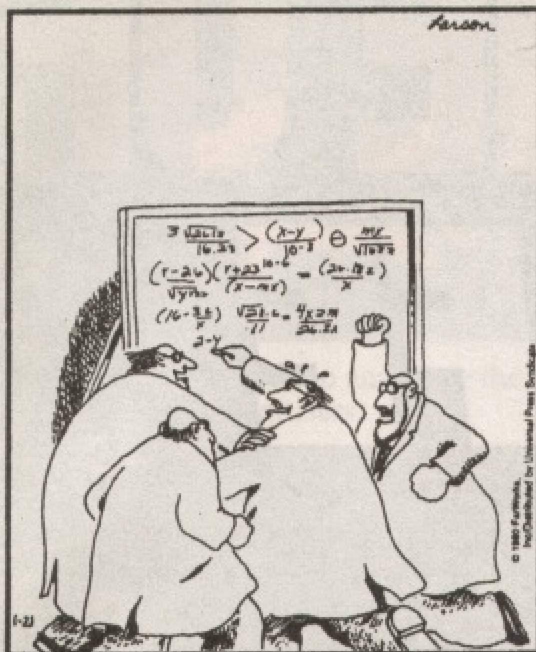
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THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



"Go for it, Sidney! You've got it! You've got it! Good hands! Don't choke!"

» on the other side of the pond, that might well change, but until then, or until LucasArts license a third party to convert their games, we're about as likely to see *Rebel Assault* on the Amiga as we are to see Tom Jones in our local pub – the City Pride. That said, our sources inform us that there are currently three Lucas Arts games ready for release on the CD32 (*Monkey Island, LeChuck's Revenge* and *Indiana Jones*), all with 256 colour graphics and some stunning sound. If those are a success, then who knows?

C'MON SCSI

One of the criticisms levelled (correctly in my view) at the A1200 is its lack of expandability via the trapdoor – e.g. a memory board on SCSI interface for CD Roms etc. Surely the solution is not so difficult? What about the SCSI hard drive units that have been available for the A500 for years that allow memory/FPUs/ accelerators etc. to be added within the drive casing?

Couldn't one of the myriad of innovative hardware producers out there produce a SCSI trapdoor expansion card (a bit like the one manufactured by GVP) that not only presented a SCSI socket via the blanking panel on the rear of the A1200 but passed all the trapdoor expansion lines out via the same socket allowing memory and acceleration expansion as with the old familiar A500 hard drive/memory/acceleration combinations?

It should be possible to daisy chain SCSI device tools since the A1200's expansion connecter is a full 32-bit beastie. Perhaps even full Zorro III cards could be fitted in such a unit as well.

Imagine an A1200 with SCSI hard drive, CD32 ROM drive and an accelerated 50MHz 68030 CPU/68882 FPU combination + masses of RAM! Maybe a 24-bit graphics card too and a Toaster! Well, perhaps I'm getting a bit carried away but there are certainly possibilities and a huge viable market for hardware producers brave enough to invest.

The A1200 is a great machine but the lack of current expandability is a real bugbear. Please, for the sake of the thousands of A1200 owners out there, let's have a decent expansion unit.
Paul Davis, Somerset.

Paul, where have you been? Have you not seen the review this issue of the GVP A1230 Pro II? Have you not marvelled at the fact that you can plug in SCSI devices and direct to disk samplers, along with whatever else GVP release in the coming months? Give people a chance, Paul. When the A500 was released, it took quite a while before some really decent peripherals started appearing (I remember when a half Meg trapdoor expansion was a big thing to own!). The A1200 is leaping ahead faster than most people expected, but not quite as fast as some people want.

SUB STANDARD

I am a dedicated reader of CU AMIGAand have been for years. I own an A500 (approx. four years) and I also have a CDTV (on your recommendation!). As with everything I buy, it went out of fashion the very next day! Don't worry, I'm not blaming you for the black box under my video. I'm just fed up.

Anyway, back to the main part of the letter. Why don't you do a subscription offer? I live in a remote part of the country where magazines take four to five millennia to reach the shelves after their release date, and I am fed up with going to WH Smiths every day for a week waiting for the latest CU AMIGA to appear. I managed to buy the December issue only three days late and that was in Safeways.

I would therefore rush at the opportunity to have my shiny new CU AMIGA delivered to my door on the release date.

I hope you don't think I am a traitor when I mention that I do read other magazines which do have subscription offers, the trouble is that I don't want to subscribe to them even if you do get an extra disk full of PD because they are mostly rubbish. In fact, CU AMIGA is the only mag that I have bought every month regardless of the coverdisks.

Talking of the coverdisks may I congratulate you on giving away the most excellent disk on any magazine or cornflakes packet.

So can I expect to find a nice subscription offer in the back of my next CU AMIGA, or will I have to endure the Newsagent forever?
Adam Eccles, Penzance.

Well, it looks like your prayers have been answered Adam. You can subscribe to the magazine and have it delivered to your door – check out the contents page for details on subscription. And look out for next month for details on how you can get your hands on a whole bunch of freebies, with some other rather attractive goodies.

CLUB CALL

A1200 owners out there might be feeling a bit left out in the user group front, so, this month, we've dug deep into the Club Call mailbag and pulled out some AGA specific clubs just for you, along with one club in Ireland with a difference.

AGA EXCHANGE

Set up a few months ago, AGA Exchange is one of the only dedicated 100% AGA PD libraries there are. Although the amount of AGA specific PD is quite limited, the group are making a roaring trade in distributing shareware as well as publishing their own programmer's efforts. If you have some licenseware of your own, the group are happy to pay you £1.00 for every disk shifted. Naturally, there is a full postal help service, along with a monthly disk-based news magazine – *AGA Attack*, and a low-cost laser printing service for Amiga owners. What else can I tell you? The PD library costs just 30p per disk and postage comes to only 50p per order. If you are interested, and would like to view their disk catalogue, then contact them at: AGA Exchange, 18 Brownshill, Cromer, Norfolk, NR27 0QA.

A1200 ONLY

Ben Cowdall has set up this PD library with the aim of being the "World's First And Only Amiga 1200 Specific PD Library". He has a massive collection of PD already and is always looking for more, so if you've got anything you want the world to see, then let him know. He's also in the process of putting together a regular disk-based magazine, and is looking for contributors, so what are you waiting for? Contact Ben at: 27 Pheasant Way, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL6 1BJ.

AMIGA MAD CATS PENPAL CLUB

This is an unusual one in that it doesn't focus on the Amiga, but on the actual users themselves. The aim behind the club is to establish connections between Amiga-owning lonely hearts who have no friends with Amiga computers. Deidre Keelan has been in that position herself, so she has set up this interchange where people can meet others with similar interests, have a laugh, swop PD disks and generally socialise. If you want to be a member, you need to supply a £2.00 fee towards postage and fill out a simple membership form about yourself and the kind of penpal you want. For more information write to: Deidre Keelan, Farndreg Cottage, Mount Ave., Dundalk, Co. Louth, Ireland.

THE GAME OF LIFE

John Kennedy is in a pensive mood this month. Here, he treats us to his view of the year that has just passed.

In a city, a child sits in a room. The central heating has made the double glazing mist up, but if he were to wipe it clear with his podgey hand and look upwards, the orange glow from the streetlights would mask all but the brightest stars.

The child is watching a colour monitor and his shadow projected on the wall flickers as the on-screen images shift and change. As he deftly manipulates the joystick he occasionally curses under his breath, and stabs the keyboard to start the game again. The CD-ROM drive whirrs as it pulls the megabytes of data into the computer.

BANALITY

On a pile of magazines next to the computer sits a half-eaten bar of chocolate, and a glass of flat cola is placed far enough away so as not to cause a threat if spilt. The muffled noise of a NICAM FST television in the other room drifts through the wall as it shows the repeat of a 1989 Christmas special in the sitting room. The child's father watches mirthlessly in semi-darkness whilst mother smokes a cigarette in the kitchen as she waits for the dishwasher to finish the dry cycle.

As the television programme ends and the news programme starts, she is attracted by the familiar title music and moves into the sitting room. The intricate ray-traced images of the channel logo flash across the screen to the beat of an up-tempo electronic fugue, but everything fades gently to an earnest news reader with plastic hair and capped teeth. The gen-locked image over his conservatively -suited shoulder shows a ball of flame with the word 'DISASTER' underneath it in bold capitals.

The news story is over in a matter of minutes, and the next appears: the word 'TERRORISM' whizzes on-screen. This story is even shorter, and the word 'FAMINE' replaces it within seconds. Now a haggard on-the-spot reporter talks to camera, surrounded by emaciated children. Mother removes her cigarette and makes tut-tut noises as she returns to the kitchen to clean the microwave.

DESTRUCTION

Onto the weather, and the forecaster is in a statistical mode as they point out the continuing temporary blip in the annual temperature charts. Once again it has been the coldest, wettest, hottest and driest month since records began.

The father flicks through the other channels, finally settling for some computer-generated advertisements and the promise of a new celebrity panel show. Someone he had met in the dole queue had told him that the girl with the large chest from the currently-popular imported soap was featuring, and he didn't want to miss it. He opens another beer and settles down.

Suddenly everything freezes – the images on the video game screen, the foam from the beer can, even the smoke from the cigarette hangs motionless. Silently, high above the city towards the east, a tiny speck of light starts to glow. It gradually gets brighter, changing from red to yellow to white until it fills the entire sky. Abruptly it fades, leaving only the words 'Game Over' floating in a void.

The child curses under his breath, and snatches the VR eye-set from his face. Another lost game. Another entire population has turned inward, stagnant and suffocating. He takes the optical disk from the player, and placing it back in its box, puts his copy of 'SIM 1993' back on the shelf.



Who would have guessed that this jovial-looking John Kenndy could be so intense?